Exhibit 23

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9   Re: Rodriguez, Et Al Versus Google, LLC.

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11   Transcript of the Video Recorded Proceedings of

12   "Google CEO Testifies on Data Collection."

13   CSPAN

14   December 12, 2018

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16   Transcribed by Melissa Iadimarco

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1   (Transcript of video proceedings.)
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Good
3   morning. The Judiciary Committee will come to order and
4   without objection, The Chair is authorized to declare
5   recesses of the committee at any time. We welcome everyone
6   to this morning's hearing on transparency and
7   accountability, examining Google and its data collection use
8   and filtering practices. Before I recognize myself and the
9   ranking member for opening statements, I'd like to recognize
10   our first witness, the majority leader, Kevin McCarthy of
11   California for his statement. Welcome.
12   REPRESENTATIVE KEVIN MCCARTHY: Well, thank you,
13   Mr. Goodlatte, Chairman Goodlatte for working with me to
14   organize this hearing. I want to thank Sundar Pichai for
15   testifying on Capitol Hill. We appreciate and note your
16   willingness to travel here and answer our questions, first
17   in a private setting in September. And now in a public
18   setting. Google is one of the most valuable companies in
19   America, because of what it does. Google's search engine
20   organizes the entire internet and, by extension, almost all
21   the information in the world.
22   This is hardly an exaggeration. Here's a statistic
23   you will hear a lot today, but it bears repeating.
24   According to The Wall Street Journal, 90 percent of all
25   internet searches go through Google. That is power. And it

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1   comes with responsibility. Mr. Pichai it is -- it was
2   necessary to convene this hearing, because of the widening
3   gap of distrust between technology companies and the
4   American people.
5   For our country and economy to grow stronger, the
6   American people must be able to have trust in the great
7   companies of the 21st century. We can alleviate some of
8   their concerns today, with transparency and candor. I hope
9   we can begin to restore trust in the technology companies
10   that shape our world, but we need answers.
11   We need to know first, that Google is committed to
12   the free market ideals of competition and entrepreneurship
13   that launched its revolutionary products to begin with.
14   Second, we need to be sure that any political bias within
15   Google's workforce does not creep into its search products.
16   Third, we need to know that Google is living up to the
17   America's belief in free expression and human rights, when
18   it deals with foreign governments.
19   Now, a word on the last subject. Right now, Google
20   reportedly is developing a censored search engine with the
21   Chinese Communist Party. It is also developing next
22   generation technology on Chinese soil and in conjunction
23   with Chinese national champions, like Tencent. Technology
24   that the admin -- administration considers a national
25   priority.

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1   Now, this news raises a troubling possibility, that
2   Google is being used to strengthen China's system of
3   surveillance, depression and control. Right this very
4   second China's authoritarian system detains more than a
5   1000000 religious minorities in reeducation camps. Mr.
6   Pichai, I urge you to reflect on that fact and on the
7   promise your company made when it pulled out of the China
8   market in 2010; and I applauded you for that move in 2010.
9   Back then Google promised it would not sensor its
10   search results in China or compromise its commitment to a
11   free and open internet. Now in light of these recent
12   events, I think the American people deserve to know: If
13   something changed and if so, what? All of these topics,
14   competition, censorship, bias and others point to one
15   fundamental question that demands the nation's attention.
16   Are America's technology companies serving as
17   instruments of freedom or instruments of control? Are they
18   fulfilling the promise of the digital age? Are they
19   advancing the cause of self-government or are they serving
20   as instruments of manipulation, used by powerful interests
21   and foreign governments to rob the people of their power,
22   agency and dignity.
23   I believe we need to grapple with these questions
24   together as a nation, because a free world depends on a free
25   internet. We need to know that Google is on the side of the

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1   free world and that it will provide its services free of
2   anticompetitive behavior, political bias, and censorship.
3   I want to thank you again for being here and
4   answering these questions. I look forward to listening to
5   the answers with a very open mind and I yield back.
6   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: I'd now
7   like to invite Mr. Pichai to take his seat at the witness
8   table. Without objection The Chair now recognizes the
9   ranking member, Mr. Nadler, for a point of personal
10   privilege to recognize a member of his staff, a very
11   distinguished member of his staff.
12   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: Thank you, Mr.
13   Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to take a moment to
14   recognize Danielle Brown, whose last working day for the
15   committee is tomorrow. Danielle has served on the judiciary
16   committee democratic staff for more than a decade in a
17   variety of roles, beginning as staff assistant and then
18   going to counsel parliamentarian, chief legislative counsel
19   and most recently, deputy chief counsel.
20   Danielle has been essential to the operations of
21   this committee and she has been involved in nearly every
22   important piece of committee business over the last decade.
23   Her interests and expertise range from protecting vulnerable
24   immigrants, to ensuring reproductive freedom and preserving
25   vital consumer protections. She is leaving us now,

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1 unfortunately, to become general counsel and parliamentarian
2 of the ways and means committee. Our loss is surely their
3 game. I wish her well. I appreciate her wise counsel. I
4 thank her for all of her years of service to this committee,
5 and I hope the committee will join me in thanking her for
6 her years of service to this committee.
7   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Would the
8 gentleman yield?
9   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: I will yield to the
10 chairman.
11   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: I thank
12 the gentleman for yielding. I would like to join him in
13 thanking Danielle for her service to this committee. She
14 has worked with members on both sides of the aisle. She has
15 worked with the majority staff very productively, very
16 cooperatively on a great many issues that have made this
17 committee, not only more productive, but also operating in a
18 fashion that has resulted in a number of bills getting from
19 this committee all the way to the president's desk; whether
20 that president be Barack Obama or Donald Trump. That's an
21 accomplishment that this entire committee should be proud of
22 and Danielle should be proud that she's played an important
23 part in doing that and I thank you.
24   I now recognize myself for an opening statement.
25 In The United States, Google operates the preeminent

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1 internet search engine, the leading email service provider,
2 and the Android operating system, which runs most of its
3 smart -- most of the smart phones in The United States.
4 When a consumer performs an internet search, sends an email
5 or uses his or her smartphone, Google collects information
6 on that person.
7   In fact, almost every minute of every day, the
8 Android operating system sends information about the exact
9 location, temperature, barometric pressure and speed of
10 movement of every phone that runs on the Android operating
11 system.
12   With Americans carrying their smartphones all day,
13 every day, Google is able to collect an amount of
14 information about its users that would even make the NSA
15 blush. Of course, when users click through the terms of
16 service for these services, they do consent to such
17 collection, but I think it is fair to say, that most
18 Americans have no idea the sheer volume of detailed
19 information that is collected.
20   Today, I hope to get answers on the extent of data
21 collection and use by Google. In addition, decades ago,
22 Congress passed the Communications Decency Act, including
23 Section 230 of that act, which allows service providers to
24 remove lewd, lascivious, excessively violent or otherwise
25 objectionable content from their platforms. This law allows

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1 service providers to remove illegal materials, including
2 child pornography and content that is illegal under our
3 intellectual property laws.
4   While meant to allow them to block illegal, obscene
5 and harmful materials, there is some discretion that service
6 providers by necessity must use to make decisions about what
7 content is harmful or objectionable.
8   Given Google's ubiquity in the search market,
9 Google is often consumers first and last stop when searching
10 for information on the internet. As such, this committee is
11 very interested in how Google makes decisions about what
12 constitutes objectionable content that justifies filtering
13 and who at Google makes these decisions.
14   Given the revelation that top executives at Google
15 have discussed how the results of the 2016 elections do
16 comply with Google's values, these questions have become all
17 the more important. While it is true that Google is not a
18 government entity and so it does not have to comply with the
19 First Amendment, the American people deserve to know what
20 types of information they are not getting when they perform
21 searches on the internet.
22   The market works best when information about
23 products and services is readily available. And so today,
24 on behalf of this committee and the American consumer, I
25 hope to get answers from Mr. Pichai regarding who at Google

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1 makes the judgment calls on whether to filter or block
2 objectionable content and what metrics Google uses to make
3 those decisions. I want to thank Google's CEO for his
4 willingness to testify today and to answer these and other
5 questions.
6   With respect to search results, algorithmic
7 screening is the primary means through which Google sorts
8 data and information. Google search algorithm, for example,
9 calculates what is presented to a user based on the
10 variables the user inputs into the search bar.
11   At its best, Google's algorithm reaches the best
12 answer in the least amount of time, while providing choices
13 to the user by ranking pages most relevant to the search
14 inquiry. Of course, by ranking pages, Google search always
15 favors one page over another.
16   This kind of bias appears harmless. After all, the
17 point of a search is to discriminate among multiple relevant
18 sources to find the best answer. This process, however,
19 turns much more sinister with allegations that Google
20 manipulates its algorithm to favor the political party it
21 likes, the ideas that it likes or the products that it
22 likes.
23   There are numerous allegations in the news, that
24 Google employees have thought about doing this, talked about
25 doing this and have done it. The dangerous implications to

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1   a fair democratic process cannot be understated.
2   One study performed by a psychologist Robert
3   Epstein, has revealed that internet search rankings have a
4   significant impact on consumer choices, mainly because users
5   trust and choose higher ranked results more than lower
6   ranked results.
7   After performing five relevant double blind
8   randomized controlled experiments using a total of 4,556
9   undecided voters representing diverse demographic
10   characteristics of the voting populations of The United
11   States and India, the study revealed that biased search
12   rankings can shift the voting preferences of undecided
13   voters by 20 percent or more.
14   The shift can be much higher in some demographic
15   groups and search ranking bias can be masked, so that people
16   show no awareness of the manipulation. The potential for
17   this kind of bias is clearly problematic and is further
18   compounded by the fact that Google every day collects
19   mountains of information about its users while they are
20   actively engaged with a Google product or even when they are
21   not.
22   According to a study conducted by Vanderbilt
23   University, a dormant stationary Android phone with Chrome
24   active in the background, communicated location information
25   to Google 340 times during a 24 hour period or at an average

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1   of 14 data communications per hour. The location -- the
2   collection of location data may be obvious to most users,
3   but they are often unaware of the many sensors that the
4   Android platform supports, including an accelerometer, a
5   barometer and a photo meter. These -- photometer.
6   These sensors, in addition to the cameras and
7   microphone on a mobile device, can collate into a very
8   accurate picture of where a user is, what they are doing and
9   who else is there. The shocking amount of information that
10   Google collects via its phones was recently featured on Good
11   Morning America, in which a reporter using an Android phone
12   with no sim card, that wasn't connected to the internet,
13   discovered that the phone collected the devices movement,
14   even identifying the mode of transportation, such as the
15   subway or even a bicycle and at times taking 10 sensor
16   readings per minute.
17   Moreover, Google's practice of reinforcing its
18   dominance, in light of allegations of self-serving bias,
19   creates little choice for consumers across the spectrum of
20   internet based products or services. Given that Google's
21   ads show up on non-Google websites and Google search engine
22   is being used as the default search tool on other products,
23   such as the Apple phone, it is almost impossible to avoid
24   Google all together.
25   Google in many things -- Google is many things.

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1   It's one of the largest data collectors ever seen in human
2   history. It's an advertiser, that can get the right product
3   to the right customer at precisely the right time. Google
4   is also an internet giant, directing over 3.5 billion
5   searches per day. With this massive authority, however,
6   comes the potential for far reaching abuse.
7   The mere suspicion that Google manipulates its
8   products and features for self-serving or even political
9   purposes, raises serious concerns about its business
10   practices, its impact on free speech in our democratic
11   process. And Americans trust that the information gathered
12   about them in their day to day lives is done with their
13   knowledge and is not being used against them. My hope is
14   that, through our inquiries today, we will ensure more
15   transparency and accountability going forward.
16   Last, despite the nature and scope of today's
17   hearing, Google is still the story of the American dream.
18   The company was started by two individuals in a garage and
19   grew to be one of the most successful companies in the
20   world. Two decades ago, we could not fathom instantaneous
21   access to more information than that which is contained in
22   all the encyclopedias in the world. Now we take that for
23   granted, because of the innovative services Google provides.
24   With that, I want to again thank our witness for
25   his presence here today. I look forward to your testimony.

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1   And it's now my pleasure to recognize the ranking member of
2   the committee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Nadler, for
3   his opening statement.
4   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: Thank you, Mr.
5   Chairman. Mr. Chairman, our society has become increasingly
6   reliant on social media and other online platforms to
7   obtain, create, share and sort information. This
8   information helps us make decisions ranging in importance
9   from where to make dinner reservations, to which candidate
10   to vote for in a presidential election. The public's
11   increasing use of these platforms has generated many
12   positive benefits for society, but it has -- it has also
13   given rise to some troubling trends.
14   Google is among the dominant firms in this field.
15   As such, given the public's widespread use and reliance on
16   its products and services, there are legitimate questions
17   regarding the company's policies and practices, including
18   with respect to content moderation and the protection of
19   user privacy. But before we delve into these questions, I
20   must first dispense with a completely illegitimate issue,
21   which is the fantasy dreamed up by some conservatives, that
22   Google and other online platforms have an anti-conservative
23   bias.
24   As I've said repeatedly, no credible evidence
25   supports this right-wing conspiracy theory. I have little

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1 doubt that my Republican colleagues will spend much of their
2 time presenting a laundry list of anecdotes and out of
3 context statements made by Google employees as supposed
4 evidence of anti-conservative bias, but none of that will
5 actually make it true. But this fact free propaganda does
6 help generate the mistrust that the majority leader referred
7 to a few moments ago.
8   And even if Google were deliberately discriminating
9 against conservative viewpoints, just as Fox News and
10 Sinclair Broadcasting and conservative talk radio host like
11 Rush Limbaugh discriminate against liberal points of view,
12 that would be its right, as a private company, to do so; not
13 to be questioned by government.
14   During the Reagan administration, about 35 years
15 ago, The Federal Communications Commissioners appointed by
16 Ronald Reagan, abolished what we used to have called the
17 Fairness Doctrine, which placed an obligation on
18 broadcasters who used the public air waves, to be fair to
19 different points of view. This question might be relevant
20 if the Republican members wanted to bring back the Fairness
21 Doctrine and expand its scope to social media companies.
22   I doubt we will see any interest in doing so, but
23 we should not let the delusions of the far right distract us
24 from the real issues that should be the focus of today's
25 hearing. For example, we should examine what Google is

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1 doing to stop hostile foreign powers from using its platform
2 to spread false information, in order to harm our political
3 discourse. It has been more than two years since the 2016
4 election, yet this committee has not held a single hearing
5 focused on Russia's campaign to manipulate online platforms
6 to undermine American democracy. Despite the fact that it
7 is the consensus view of our intelligence agencies, that
8 Russia engaged in a massive disinformation campaign to
9 influence the 2016 election.
10   I hope that Mr. Pichai can tell us what actions
11 Google has taken to counter this unprecedented attack and
12 what gaps remain in its defenses, without being so specific
13 as to give a -- a guidance to foreign powers. This may help
14 Congress determine what more can be done to further insulate
15 our democratic processes from foreign interference.
16   We should also examine how Google enforces
17 community standards to prohibit racist of bigoted threats,
18 and other inappropriate conduct. While internet platforms
19 have produced many societal benefits, they've also provided
20 a new tool for those seeking to stoke racial and ethnic
21 hatreds. The presence of hateful conduct and content on
22 these platforms has been made all the more alarming by the
23 recent rise in hate motivated violence.
24   According to statistics, recently released by the
25 FBI reported incidents of hate crimes rose by 17 percent

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1 last year compared to 2016, marking the third consecutive
2 year that such reports have increased. The horrible
3 massacre at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, the
4 recent murder of an African American couple in a Kentucky
5 grocery store, the killing of an Indian engineer last year
6 in Kansas are sadly not isolated outbursts of violence, but
7 the most salient examples of a troubling trend. We should
8 consider to what extent Google and other online platforms
9 may have been used to foment and to disseminate such hatreds
10 and how these platforms can play a constructive role in
11 combatting its spread.
12   As the dominant player in its field, Google
13 possesses significant market power. It is also useful to
14 examine its policies and practices to ensure that other
15 companies are able to compete, in an open and fair
16 marketplace. There were also concerns about the prevalence
17 of pirated material available on Google and other internet
18 platforms at the expense of legitimate content.
19   Finally, it is important to know what Google is
20 doing to protect its users data privacy and data security.
21 The Wall Street Journal recently reported that Google
22 discovered last March, that a bug in its social media
23 platform Google Plus, had exposed the private profile data
24 of up to 500,000 users to third party developers, but it
25 opted not to disclose the issue publicly, not even to those

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1 who may have been affected at the time. And just yesterday,
2 the company announced that it had discovered another Google
3 Plus bug that may have exposed the private profile data of
4 millions of users.
5   While Google has so far found no evidence that
6 developers have in fact abused these bugs or that any use of
7 profile data has been misused in any way, incidents like
8 this still raise legitimate questions about what types of
9 data exposures the company is obligated to disclose
10 publicly. It also raises questions about how much control
11 users should have over their own data and how such control
12 should be regulated.
13   I am also disturbed by recent reports that Google
14 is developing a search engine for the Chinese mainland
15 market. According to these reports, the search engine would
16 not only accommodate Chinese government censors, it might
17 allow the Chinese government to track individuals by linking
18 search terms to the user's mobile phone number.
19   Unfortunately, in this our fourth hearing devoted
20 to entirely fictitious allegations of conservative -- of
21 anti-conservative bias by internet companies, we will waste
22 more time and more tax pair money and elevating well worn
23 right-wing conspiracy theories, instead of concentrating the
24 substantive questions and issues that should be the focus of
25 our hearings. Our committee can and must and will do

5 (Pages 14 - 17)

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1 better.
2   I yield back the balance of my time.
3   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you,
4 Mr. Nadler, we welcome our distinguished witness, and if you
5 would please rise, I'll begin by swearing you in.
6   Please raise your right hand.
7   Do you swear that the testimony that you are about
8 to give shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but
9 the truth, so help you God?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I do.
11   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you.
12 Let the record show that the witness answered in the
13 affirmative. Our only witness today is Mr. Sundar Pichai.
14 Mr. Pichai is the chief executive officer of Google. Your
15 written statement will be entered into the record in its
16 entirety, and we ask that you summarize your testimony in
17 five minutes. To help you stay within that time, there's a
18 timing light on your table. When the light switches from
19 green to yellow, you have one minute to conclude your
20 testimony. When the light turns red, it signals your five
21 minutes have expired.
22   Mr. Pichai, you are very welcome, and you may
23 begin.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Chairman Goodlatte, Ranking
25 Member Nadler, distinguished members of the committee, thank

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1 you for the opportunity to be here today. I joined Google
2 15 years ago, and I've been privileged to serve as CEO for
3 the past three years, but my love for information and
4 technology began long before that.
5   It's been 25 years since I made the U.S. my home.
6 Growing up in India, I have distinct memories of when my
7 family got its first phone and its first television. Each
8 new technology made a profound difference in our lives.
9 Getting the phone meant I could call ahead to the hospital
10 to check that the blood results were in instead of taking a
11 two hour trip there. And the television, well, it only had
12 one channel, but I couldn't have been more thrilled by its
13 arrival.
14   Those experiences made me a technology optimist,
15 and I remain one today, not only because I believe in
16 technology, but because I believe in people and their
17 ability to use technology to improve their lives. I'm
18 incredibly proud of what Google does to empower people
19 around the world, especially here in the U.S. I'd like to
20 take a moment to share a bit of background on that.
21   20 years ago, two students, one from Michigan and
22 one from Maryland, came together at Stanford with a big
23 idea. To provide users with access to the world's
24 information. That mission still drives everything we do,
25 whether that's saving you a few minutes on your morning

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1 commute or helping doctors detect disease and save lives.
2   Today, Google is more than a search engine. We are
3 a global company that's committed to building products for
4 everyone. That means working with many industries, from
5 education and healthcare to manufacturing and entertainment.
6 Even as we expand into new markets, we never forget our
7 American roots.
8   It's no coincidence that a company dedicated to
9 free flow of information was founded right here in the U.S.
10 As an American company, we cherish the values and freedoms
11 that have allowed us to grow and serve so many users. And
12 I'm proud to say, we do and we will continue to work with
13 the government to keep our country safe and secure.
14   Over the years, our footprint has expanded far
15 beyond California to states such as Texas, Virginia,
16 Oklahoma, and Alabama. Today in the U.S., we're growing
17 faster outside of The Bay Area than within it. I've had the
18 great opportunity to travel across the country and see all
19 the places that are -- that are powering our digital
20 economy. From Clarksville to Pittsburgh to San Diego, where
21 we recently launched a partnership with the USO, to help
22 veterans and military families.
23   Along the way, I've met many people who depend on
24 Google to learn new skills, find jobs or new businesses.
25 Over the past year, we have supported more than 1.5 million

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1 American businesses. And over the past three years, we've
2 made direct contributions of $150 billion to the U.S.
3 economy, added more than 24,000 employees and paid over $43
4 billion to our U.S. partners across search, YouTube and
5 Android. These investments strengthen our communities and
6 support thousands of American jobs. They also allow us to
7 provide great services to our users to help them through the
8 day. It's an honor to play this role in people's lives, and
9 it's one we know comes with great responsibility.
10   Protecting the privacy and security of our users
11 has long been an essential part of our mission. We've
12 invested an enormous amount of work over the years to bring
13 choice, transparency and control to our users. These values
14 are built into every product we make. We recognize the
15 important role of governments, including this committee, in
16 setting rules for the development and use of technology.
17   To that end, we support federal privacy legislation
18 and proposed the legislative framework for privacy earlier
19 this year. Users look -- look to us to provide accurate,
20 trusted information, and we work hard to ensure the
21 integrity of our products. We have put a number of checks
22 and balances in place to ensure they continue to live up to
23 our standards. I lead this company without political bias
24 and work to ensure that our products continue to operate
25 that way. To do otherwise would be against our core

6 (Pages 18 - 21)

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1 principles and our business interests.
2   We are a company that provides platforms for
3 diverse perspectives and opinions, and there is no shortage
4 of them amongst our employees. Some Googlers are former
5 servicemen and women who have risked much in defense of
6 their country. Some are civil libertarians who fiercely
7 defend freedom of expression. Some are parents who worry
8 about the role technology plays in our households. Some,
9 like me, are immigrants who are profoundly grateful to the
10 freedoms and opportunities it offers. And some of us are
11 many of these things.
12   Let me close by saying that leading Google has been
13 the greatest professional honor of my life. It's a
14 challenging moment for our industry, but I'm privileged to
15 be here. I greatly appreciate you letting me share the
16 story of Google and our work to build products worthy of the
17 trust users placing is. Thank you for the opportunity, and
18 I look forward to answering your questions.
19   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you.
20 We'll now proceed under the five minute rule with questions,
21 and I'll begin by recognizing myself.
22   Mr. Pichai, is it true that the Android operating
23 system sends Google information every few minutes detailing
24 the exact location of a smartphone within a few feet, the
25 speed of movement of the phone, the altitude of the phone

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1 sufficient to determine what floor of a building the phone
2 is on, the temperature surrounding the phone and other
3 readings and if so, with Americans carrying their phones
4 with them virtually at all times, doesn't the collection of
5 this volume of detailed information really mean that Google
6 is compiling information about virtually every movement an
7 individual with a smartphone is making every hour of every
8 day?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Mr. Chairman, thank you for the
10 question. Today, for any service we provide our users, we
11 go to great lengths to protect their privacy and we give
12 them transparency, choice, and control. Android is a
13 powerful platform and -- and provides smartphone for over 2
14 billion people. And as part of that, it depends on the
15 applications users choose to use. If you're using a fitness
16 application, which is deducting the number of steps you
17 walk, you expect it to send that information, but it's a
18 choice users make. We make it clear and -- and it depends
19 on the use cases.
20   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: So the --
21 the answer to my question, my first question, is yes; is
22 that correct? That the information that I cited is gathered
23 by Google?
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It -- if -- if the -- for
25 Google services, you have a choice of what information is

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1 collected, and we make it transparent -- transparent.
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: I
3 understand there are -- there are uses that consumers make
4 use of. I use it to keep track of the number of steps I
5 walk. I understand that service that one of your
6 competitors provides. So I -- I understand that purpose.
7 But do you think the average consumer understands that
8 Google will collect this volume of detailed information,
9 when they click through the terms of service agreements in
10 order to use the Android operating system?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It's really important for us
12 that, you know, that average users are able to understand
13 it. This is why we do something called privacy check-up.
14   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Do you
15 think average users read the terms of service and the
16 updates that are very frequently sent to us?
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Beyond the terms of service, we
18 actually offer, we remind users, to do a privacy check-up,
19 and we make it very obvious, every month. In -- in fact, in
20 the last 28 days, 160 million users went to -- went to their
21 My Account settings where they can clearly see what
22 information we have. We actually give, you know, show it
23 back to them, and we give clear toggles, by category, where
24 they can decide whether that information is collected,
25 stored. Or more importantly, if they decide to stop using

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1 it, we work hard to make it possible for users to take the
2 data with them, if they choose to use another service.
3   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Let me
4 switch to the issue of Section 230 of the Communications
5 Decency Act. You heard me say in my opening statement that
6 this provides broad liability protections for you and other
7 technology companies for good faith restrictions, that when
8 Google thinks something is obscene, lewd, lascivious,
9 filthy, excessively violent, harassing or otherwise
10 objectionable.
11   On the other hand, objectionable material, by
12 whatever standard applied, likely elicits the most
13 engagement from users on your site. And for Google,
14 increased engagement potentially means increased revenue.
15 However, it is important for Google to make very clear where
16 it draws the line, and I don't believe Google has done its
17 best to make that clear.
18   So what I would ask is the following: Would Google
19 or YouTube be willing to make changes in support of a
20 healthier civic dialogue, if doing so meant a drop in user
21 engagement metrics?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Absolutely, Mr. Chairman. We
23 have a long track record of, we've always focused on long
24 term goals towards user satisfaction. We focus on their
25 knowledge, happiness, success and -- and that's what we work

7 (Pages 22 - 25)

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1 hard to create. It is important to us that platforms like
2 YouTube are viable over the long run. It's in our natural
3 incentive to do so.
4   YouTube is place where users, advertisers and
5 content creators who make their livelihoods, use the
6 platform. And so, we want to make this work in a
7 sustainable way.
8   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: When it
9 comes to political advertising, as you know, some of your
10 competitors in other advertising media are required by law,
11 to offer the same rate, the lowest rate, as a matter of
12 fact, to all political candidates. So, for example, that's
13 true in television, radio. Would Google -- should competing
14 political candidates be charged the same effective ad rates
15 to reach prospective voters?
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Our advertising products are
17 built without any bias and the -- and the rates are
18 competitive, set by a live auction process. So depending on
19 the keywords for which you're bidding for, depending on the
20 demand that is in the auction, the prices are automatically
21 calculated. So, you know, the system decides that based on
22 supply and demand.
23   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: I
24 understand it's automatically calculated, but could two
25 competing political candidates, targeting the same audience,

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1 see different add rates? And if yes, could that disparity
2 be substantial?
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yeah. There wouldn't be a
4 difference based on, you know, any political reasons, unless
5 there are keywords which are of particular interest in the
6 market determines it. So it's -- it's essentially a supply
7 and demand equilibrium. It can lead to difference in rates,
8 but it will vary from time to time.
9   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Can those
10 rates be very substantial, in difference?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: There could be occasions where
12 yes, there could be difference in rates? Yeah. I haven't
13 looked at the specifics of it. Yeah.
14   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: So the
15 result is different than in other markets, like television
16 or radio, where every candidate is entitled to the lowest
17 rate that that television station or radio station offers to
18 any political candidate for office?
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We, you know, there could be
20 variations based on the time of the day, the keywords you're
21 choosing to go for, you know, the geographies you're
22 advertising and -- but it's decided by the system and -- and
23 it's a process we've done for over 20 years. And let me
24 assure you, anything to do with our civic process, we make
25 sure we do so in a nonpartisan way, and it's really

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1 important for us.
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you.
3 The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York, Mr. Nadler
4 for five minutes.
5   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: Thank you, Mr.
6 Pichai. According to media reports, Google found evidence
7 that -- well, let me go to the other one first. Google
8 found a bug in its Google Plus social media platform that
9 could have potentially exposed the private data of up to
10 half a million users without the consent to third party
11 developers. Google, however, did not disclose this bug
12 until months later after it was revealed by report in The
13 Wall Street Journal. Yesterday, as I mentioned before, they
14 found an -- you announced another bug.
15   What legal obligations is the company under to
16 disclose data exposures that do not involve sensitive
17 financial information, but still involve private personal
18 data, like a user's name, age, email address or phone
19 number?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we take privacy
21 seriously. The bugs you mentioned are bugs. We -- we found
22 them by either doing an audit or, you know, using our
23 automated testing systems. Whenever we find any bugs we
24 follow, you know, it gets escalated to our privacy and data
25 production office, and we comply with --

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1   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: I'm -- I'm not
2 criticizing what you do. I'm asking what legal obligation
3 is the company under to disclose such -- such data
4 exposures. That don't involve financial information. But
5 still involve other personal information?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It depends on the situation.
7 We follow the requirements. And -- and in that case, in the
8 first case, typically we look at our legal requirements, but
9 we go above and beyond to make sure we do the right thing
10 for our users. In the first case, both there was no
11 evidence data was misused and we couldn't accurately --
12   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: I understand all
13 that, but my question is: What legal obligations are there?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know today, right now, if
15 you're found a bug, you know, and you ascertain -- once
16 you've done the investigation and you have ascertained the
17 users who are eligible for notification, my understanding is
18 you have 72 hours, and we both notify users, as well as,
19 regulators in that time frame.
20   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: Okay. Thank you.
21 Now, according to media reports, Google found evidence that
22 Russian agents spent thousands of dollars to purchase ads on
23 its advertising platforms, that span multiple Google
24 products, as part of the agents, the Russian agents,
25 campaign to interfere in the election two years ago.

8 (Pages 26 - 29)

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1   Additionally, Juniper Downs, head of global policy
2 for YouTube, testified in July that YouTube had identified
3 and shut down multiple -- and shut down multiple channels
4 containing thousands of videos associated with the Russian
5 misinformation campaign.
6   Does Google now know the full extent to which its
7 online platforms were exploited by Russian actors in the
8 election two years ago?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have, you know, we undertook
10 a very thorough investigation and in 2016, we -- we now know
11 that there were two main ad accounts linked to Russia
12 which -- which, you know, advertised on Google for about
13 $4,700 in advertising. We also found other limited --
14   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: A total of $4,700.
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's right, which was -- you
16 know, no amount is okay here, but, you know, but we found
17 limited activity, improper activity. We've learned a lot
18 from that, and we've, you know, dramatically increased the
19 protections we have around our election offerings. Leading
20 up to the current elections, we did -- we again found
21 limited activity, both from the internet research agency in
22 Russia, as well as, accounts linked to Iran.
23   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: And what -- what
24 specific steps have you taken, including during the recent
25 2018 elections, to protect against further interference by

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1 Russia or other hostile foreign powers?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We've undertaken significant
3 review of how ads are bought. You know, we look for the
4 origin of these accounts. We share and collaborate with law
5 enforcement, other technology companies, and we essentially
6 are investing a lot of effort and oversight in this area.
7   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: And looking ahead
8 to the next congress, I assume we can have your assurances
9 that Google will work with this committee, as we examine the
10 issue of how to better secure our elections from future
11 foreign interference?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, protecting our
13 elections is foundational to our democracy. And you -- you
14 have my full commitment that we'll do that.
15   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: Okay. My last
16 question because the time is running out, what are you
17 doing, what is Google doing, to combat the spread of white
18 supremacy and right-wing extremism across YouTube?
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, YouTube is an
20 important platform. We do want to allow for diverse
21 perspectives and opinions, but we have rules of the road.
22 We have clear content policies and we have policies against
23 many categories and we -- we are transparent about these
24 policies. And, you know, and when we find violations on our
25 policies, we do remove those videos and handle content.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: When you find
2 violations, you want?
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Of your -- of our policy. For
4 example, we have policies against hate speech and we clearly
5 define them. And if we find any violations there, we do
6 take down the -- take down content.
7   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: When you take down
8 the content, do you note who put it up, so you can flag
9 future content from the same sources?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We -- we -- we on -- you know,
11 we look at it on a video by video basis. To the extent
12 there are repeat offenses from same account, we do take into
13 account and we notify the content creator and we follow up
14 accordingly.
15   REPRESENTATIVE JERROLD NADLER: Thank you, very
16 much. I yield back.
17   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
18 recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Smith, for five
19 minutes.
20   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Thank you, Mr.
21 Chairman. Mr. Chairman, Google has revolutionized the
22 world, though not entirely in the way I expected. Americans
23 deserve the facts objectively reported. The muting of
24 conservative voices by internet platforms has intensified,
25 especially during the presidency of Donald Trump. More than

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1 90 percent of all internet searches take place on Google or
2 its subsidiary YouTube, and they are curating what we see.
3   Google has long faced criticism for manipulating
4 search results to sensor conservatives. Conservative
5 individuals and organizations have had their pro-Trump
6 content tagged as hate speech or had their content reduced
7 in search results. And enforcement of immigration laws has
8 been tagged as hate speech, as well. Such actions pose a
9 grave threat to our democratic form of government.
10   PJ Media found that 96 percent of search results
11 for Trump were from liberal media outlets. In fact, not a
12 single right leaning site appeared on the first page of
13 search results. This doesn't happen by accident, but is
14 baked into the algorithms. Those who write the algorithms
15 get the results they must want, and apparently management
16 allows it. Dr. Robert Epstein, a Harvard trained
17 psychologist authored a study recently that showed Google's
18 biased likely swung 2.6 million votes to Hillary Clinton in
19 the 2016 election.
20   Google could well elect the next president with
21 dire implications for our democracy. This should be of real
22 concern to all, but the most politically partisan. Those at
23 the top set the tone. It will require a herculean effort by
24 the chief executive and senior management to change the
25 political bias now programmed into the company's culture.

9 (Pages 30 - 33)

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1   And, Mr. Pichai, let me ask my first question,
2   about those examples of political bias that I just
3   mentioned, and you're going to hear others, too. In your
4   opening statement, you mentioned your desire to provide
5   information that was without political bias. Clearly that's
6   not working. So what are you going to improve that
7   situation?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, thanks for the
9   question. If I may, some of the studies you mentioned, we
10   have investigated those. There are -- there are other
11   studies which I've looked at that. We have found issues
12   with the methodology and the sample size and so on. But let
13   me step back and say, providing users with high quality,
14   accurate and trusted information is sacrosanct to us. It's
15   what our principles are and our business interests, our
16   natural, long term incentives, are aligned with that. We
17   want to serve users everywhere and we need to earn the trust
18   in doing so.
19   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Right. So -- so what
20   actions are you going to take, to try to counter the
21   political bias in some of those examples that I just gave?
22   I mean, they're irrefutable. So it -- it occurs. You have
23   to take some responsibility for that bias. What do you
24   intend to do about it?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, with respect Dr.

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1   Epstein's study, we investigated. We -- we don't agree with
2   the methodology. Happy to follow up with your office and
3   give our findings.
4   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Right.
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: On that -- on that study.
6   When -- when we look at it, we evaluate our studies to
7   evaluate our search results. Today, we use a very robust
8   methodology, and we've been doing this for 20 years. Making
9   sure the results are accurate is what we need to do well and
10   we work hard to do that.
11   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: What does methodology
12   have to do with the fact that 96 percent of the references
13   to Trump are from liberal media.
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: There are always studies, you
15   know, which can show one -- one set of data and arrive at
16   conclusions. But we have looked at results on our top news
17   category. We find that we have a wide variety of sources,
18   including sources from the left and sources from the right.
19   And we're committed to making sure there's diverse
20   perspectives.
21   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: By the way, the study
22   that I referred to was done by a self-proclaimed Democrat,
23   who voted for Hillary Clinton and said he regretted to find
24   what he found, but he felt it was irrefutable and no one has
25   been able to disprove him.

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1   Let me go to another question, and that is, clearly
2   there may be a difference of opinion, as to the degree or
3   amount of political bias. Would you agree to allow an
4   independent entity to study your search results for
5   political bias? I know you have individuals studying that
6   now, but you appointed them. Would you allow a third party,
7   independent, outside organization to study your search
8   results and cooperate with them to determine the degree, if
9   any, of political bias?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, if I may make two
11   points. One is today there have been independent third
12   party studies looking at search results. The economist --
13   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: But you -- but you
14   chose those third parties. I'm talking about someone truly
15   independent.
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We didn't choose those third
17   parties. I mean, they completed those studies. The second,
18   is we're transparent as to how we evaluate search.
19   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Yeah.
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We publish our rater
21   guidelines. We published it externally.
22   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Right.
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: And raters evaluate it. And
24   that's how we -- you know, we are trying hard to understand
25   what users want and -- and this is something important to us

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1   to get right. I'm happy to follow up and explain the
2   methodology and the studies which have been done by
3   independent third parties.
4   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Okay. To my
5   knowledge, again, you have picked those third parties, and
6   I'd like to have someone truly independent study those
7   results, number one. Number two, also to my knowledge,
8   you've never sanctioned any employee for any type of -- for
9   manipulating the search results, whatsoever. Is that the
10   case?
11   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The time
12   of the gentleman has expired, but Mr. Pichai will be allowed
13   to answer the question.
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: And very quickly. It's not
15   possible for an individual employee or groups of employee to
16   manipulate our search results. You know, we have a robust
17   framework, including many steps in the process and -- and --
18   REPRESENTATIVE LAMAR SMITH: Well, my time is up.
19   Let me just say, I disagree. I think humans can manipulate
20   the process. It is a human process at it's base. Thank
21   you, Mr. Chairman. Yield back.
22   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
23   recognizes the gentlewoman from California, Ms. Lofgren, for
24   five minutes.
25   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Thank you, Mr.

10 (Pages 34 - 37)

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1   Chairman. And thank you for being here, Mr. Pichai. Google
2   is located in Santa Clara County, my home. And I've got to
3   say that, you know, in contrast to the recent Amazon effort
4   for a headquarters, they are proposing, Google is proposing,
5   to establish a facility in downtown San Jose, and they
6   didn't ask for any tax subsidies. In fact, they're
7   purchasing the land and paying the city gobs of money.
8   I'm going to be parochial and ask a question,
9   because I think most people in San Jose are excited by the
10   proposal, but there's anxiety about the impact on housing
11   and whether Google intends to be a partner with the city of
12   San Jose to make sure that we accommodate the housing that
13   will be necessary for the 20,000 additional employees that
14   are proposed in San Jose.
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Sorry. I missed the last part
16   of your question.
17   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Whether you would be a
18   partner with the city, in helping to provide additional
19   housing to accommodate these employees?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congresswoman, it's an
21   important question. We deeply care about the community
22   where we -- where we work. As part of this effort, we have
23   done wide outreach, and we are -- we have committed to
24   making sure there's affordable housing at varying affordable
25   levels.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Very good.
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As -- as part of -- as part of
3   the development.
4   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Thank you, so much.
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: And we're already in touch with
6   the city leaders there.
7   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Thank you, so much.
8   You know, there's so many questions and we're not going to
9   be able to deal with them all today. I'm hoping in the next
10   congress we will be able to visit with you and other tech
11   companies, to go through issues of privacy, data
12   localization and its relationship to human rights,
13   competition policies, the issue of takedown requests by
14   authoritarian regimes, encryption policy and what's going on
15   in Australia, filtering and confirmation bias and its impact
16   on society generally, both culturally and politically. But
17   we can't do that in the five minutes we have here today.
18   So I would just like to revisit some of the
19   questions that have already been asked. The chairman asked
20   about location policies in your Android system, and you
21   pointed to various apps that might provide information.
22   Let's say I got an Android phone and, unlike most people, I
23   don't have a single app on that phone. What information
24   would be collected?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, there is -- there

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1   is a device specific location setting which -- which you can
2   turn on or off and.
3   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Let's say I turn it
4   off.
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Turn it off. There's no
6   location information sent from that device.
7   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Okay.
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: But this is a complex area.
9   There are times, for example, your IP address may include
10   some location information.
11   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Correct.
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: And it's an area we're coming
13   here to doing more to make it easier.
14   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: Now, manipulation of
15   search results. I think it's important to talk about how
16   search works. Right now, if you Google the word idiot under
17   images, a picture of Donald Trump comes up. I just did
18   that. How would that happen? How does search work so that
19   that would occur?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We provide search today for any
21   time you're typing a keyword. We, as -- as Google, we have
22   crawled, we've gone out and crawled and stored billion --
23   copies of billions of web pages in our index. And we take
24   the keyword and match it against web pages and rank them
25   based on over 200 signals, things like relevance, freshness,

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1   popularity, how other people are using it. And -- and based
2   on that, you know, at any given time, we try to rank and
3   find the best results for that query. And then we evaluate
4   them at external raters, to make sure that -- and they
5   evaluate it to objective guidelines. And -- and that's how
6   we make sure the process is working --
7   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: So it's not some
8   little man sitting behind the curtain, figuring out what
9   we're going to show the user? It's basically a compilation
10   of what users are generating and trying to sort through that
11   information?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Last year, we served over 3
13   trillion searches. And just -- just as a fact, every single
14   day, 15 percent of the searches Google sees, we've never
15   seen them before. So -- so this is working at scale and,
16   you know, we don't, you know, manually intervene on any
17   particular search result.
18   REPRESENTATIVE ZOE LOFGREN: I -- I would just like
19   to note, from time to time, my colleagues on the other side
20   of the aisle complain that they hear an individual engineer
21   appears to be a Democrat and I'd just like to put this in
22   context. In Santa Clara County, Donald Trump in the -- in
23   the 2016 election got 20 percent of the vote. That's how
24   much of the vote he got. So it's not a surprise that the
25   engineers who live in Santa Clara county would reflect that

11 (Pages 38 - 41)

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1   general political outcome.
2   That has nothing to do with the algorithms and the
3   really automated process that is the search engine that
4   serves us. You know, if we didn't have Google, we wouldn't
5   be able to find any information in -- in the efficient way
6   that we do. I look forward, next year, to working with you
7   on some of the very serious questions that we face. It's
8   pretty obvious that bias against conservative voices is not
9   one of them. Thank you very much. My time has expired.
10   Mr. --
11   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
12   recognizes the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Chabot for five
13   minutes.
14   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT: Thank you, Mr.
15   Chairman. And Mr. Pichai, let me start out with something
16   real quickly. We've heard several times this morning, the
17   mention that 90 percent of the time that a person, he or
18   she, does an internet search, that it's through Google.
19   Would you basically agree that that's -- that's true?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: More than ever, there are many
21   ways users access information. Just to give an example, if
22   you're -- if you're trying to shop, if you're trying to buy
23   something, more than 50 percent of product searches
24   originated with Amazon in the U.S. today. If you're looking
25   for information on -- on news, today you can get it from

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1   more sources than ever before.
2   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT: But do you -- do you
3   dispute, then the 90 percent number?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, our internal -- I
5   mean, it's tough for us to assess the numbers. There are
6   external studies which have shown different numbers,
7   including lower numbers than that.
8   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT: Okay. Okay. Now,
9   you've -- you've heard the allegation this morning. I know
10   you dispute it, but you've heard the allegation, that there
11   is a bias in favor of liberal or progressive points of view
12   and against a more conservative point. You -- you've heard
13   that this morning already; is that correct?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, I have.
15   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT: Okay. Let -- let me
16   tell you now, about a first hand experience that -- that
17   I've had. I do a weekly blog. I've been doing it for the
18   better part of nine years now. And a while back,
19   Republicans in the house passed legislation to repeal and
20   replace Obamacare. Our bill was called the American
21   Healthcare Act or the AHCA. When I was writing my blog
22   about that, I -- I Googled American Healthcare Act, and
23   virtually every article was an attack on our bill.
24   Article after article alleging that our bill would
25   result in millions and millions of people losing the great

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1   care that they were supposedly getting under Obamacare. I
2   would argue that was completely false, but it wasn't until
3   you got to the third or fourth page of search results before
4   you found anything remotely positive a about our bill.
5   Let me give you a second example. The Republican
6   tax cut bill was passed about a year ago, the Tax Cuts
7   and -- and Jobs act, same story. Article after article
8   attacking the Republican tax cut plan, alleging the tax cuts
9   only went to the rich, when, in actuality, about 85 percent
10   of tax payers got their taxes cut, including millions and
11   millions of middle class tax payers. And once again, to
12   find any article that had anything remotely good to say
13   about our plan, you had to go deep into the -- into the
14   search results.
15   Now, I know Google's attitude. The algorithm made
16   us do it, but I -- I don't know that I buy that. How -- how
17   do you explain this apparent bias on Google's part against
18   conservative points of view, against conservative policies?
19   Is it just the algorithm or -- or is there more happening
20   there?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I understand the
22   frustration at seeing negative news. And, you know, I see
23   it on me on Google. There are times you can search on
24   Google and page after page there's negative news, which we
25   reflect. But what -- what is important here is we use a

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1   robust methodology to reflect what is being said about any
2   given topic, at any particular time and we try to do it
3   objectively using a set of rubrics.
4   It is in our interest to make sure we reflect
5   what's happening out there, in the best, objective manner
6   possible. I can comment to you, and I can assure you, we do
7   it without regards to political ideology. Our algorithms
8   have no notion of political sentiment --
9   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT: -- not -- I'm -- I'm
10   going to run out of time here. I apologize for
11   interrupting, but and -- and I -- and I sincerely believe
12   that -- that you believe what you're saying here. But
13   you've got a almost 90,000 employees, somebody out there is
14   doing something that -- that just isn't working, if you're
15   looking for unbiased results.
16   And I've seen this first hand, time after time. I
17   just mentioned two of the most obvious ones that people
18   would remember, yeah, those bills, heard about those. So
19   I -- I've seen it -- if what is -- what I've described and
20   some others. I'm sure you're going to hear other examples.
21   If it is happening, do you see how conservative
22   believe that your company is kind of putting their thumb on
23   this scale, so to speak, that you're in effect picking
24   winners and losers and political discourse out there in
25   America today and therefore actually affecting elections?

12 (Pages 42 - 45)

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1   And -- and do you see why conservative would be

2   concerned about this and why we're asking these kinds of

3   questions today? There's a lot of people that think what

4   I'm saying here is happening and I think it's happening. So

5   I -- I've only got about 20 seconds to go, but I'll yield to

6   you.

7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's important to

8   me that I -- I understand these concerns. This is why I --

9   I've been trying to reach out and meet people. We've --

10 we've done outreach. We want to explain how these things

11 work. We are happy to look at independent studies. It's

12 important to us to demonstrate that our products work

13 without any bias and -- and we build our products in a

14 neutral way. And I'm happy to follow up and look forward

15 to, you know, getting a chance to explain it better.

16   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE CHABOT: Thank you, very much.

17 And I appreciate your willingness to follow up, because

18 there's, I think, a lot of people have a lot of questions.

19 And I know I'm already out of time, but let me also thank

20 Google for one thing, and I happen to be chair of the House

21 Small Business Committee, and your company has worked with

22 an awful lot of small businesses all across the country,

23 created a lot of jobs. And I commend you for that. Yield

24 back.

25   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair

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1   recognizes the gentleman from Georgia -- sorry, the

2   gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. Jackson Lee, for five minutes.

3   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: Good morning, Mr.

4   Pichai. I'm -- I'm right here. It's a pleasure to have you

5   here this morning. I'm going to try and answer very or

6   offer to you questions, initially, that require just a yes

7   or no answer, if you would. Does Google choose conservative

8   voices over liberal voices?

9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We approach our work without

10 any political bias. We build it in a neutral way.

11   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: The answer is no or

12 yes or no?

13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: No, congresswoman.

14   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: If hate speech

15 provokes violence, is that the definition be -- other

16 aspects that you consider, that you would take it down? I

17 know there are other aspects, but particularly encouraging

18 violence, does that get taken down?

19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: In -- primary purpose of

20 inciting violence is what we consider as hate speech. Yes,

21 congresswoman.

22   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: And it would be taken

23 down?

24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes. We would remove.

25   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: I want to just take

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1   note of the fact that I look forward to best practices when

2   we start the 116th congress in terms of having more

3   hearings. My view is that this committee has washed its

4   hands clean of engaging in meaningful oversight of

5   technology platform efforts to sift through content being

6   sold by hostile foreign actors, actors claiming to heighten

7   social division at the peril of democracy.

8   I won't ask a question on that, but I will make

9   mention of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

10 Article 12, which says no one should be subjected to

11 arbitrary interference with privacy. And it's been noted

12 that Google does engage in reviewing emails. Would you

13 commit to adhering to Article 12 of the Declaration of Human

14 Rights as it relates to protecting the privacy of individual

15 emails?

16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we think privacy is

17 an important individual right. It's an important human

18 right and -- and we're committed to upholding that and happy

19 to engage in any discussions with respect to that.

20   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: I'd like to do so. We

21 know that building the U.S. economy through innovation is

22 very important. I would like to know whether or not you

23 would be open to Google involving the AI economy to

24 nontraditional areas of social economic groups. Data shows

25 the impact of not having that access. Would you be welcome

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1   or would you welcome invitations to those communities to do

2   more than what has been done?

3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Definitely. Absolutely, yes.

4   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: You received a letter

5   from the Senate a few weeks ago, regarding illegal drug

6   sales is quite extensive. And my question is: Have you

7   made any efforts to deal with the facilitating of sale of

8   counterfeit, substandard and falsified medicines sold

9   through illegal online pharmacies?

10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congresswoman, there's a

11 national crisis. We have undertaken a lot of work in this

12 area. We -- we just recently rolled out, we participated in

13 National Take-Back Day. In Google maps, we showed drop off

14 locations. We work with law enforcement here, and just last

15 week we received a corporate citizenship award from

16 Partnership for a Drug-Free America, and we are very

17 committed to doing more work in this area.

18   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: We applauded you in

19 2010, when Google took a very powerful stand of principal

20 and democratic values over profits and came out of China. I

21 am concerned that you are now going back into China and

22 upholding the Dragonfly procedures which would help sensor

23 Chinese persons seeking a lifeline of democracy and freedom.

24 How can you do that and what are you doing to minimize or to

25 indicate that this is not best practices?

13 (Pages 46 - 49)

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congresswoman, at the outset,
2   right now, we have no plans to launch in China. We have --
3   we don't have a search product there. Our -- our core
4   mission is to provide users access to information. And
5   getting access to information is an important human right.
6   So we are always compelled, across the world, to try hard to
7   provide that information. And -- but right now, there are
8   no plans to launch search in China. I'm committed to being
9   fully transparent, including with policymakers, to the
10   extent we ever develop plans to do that.
11   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: I'd like to pursue
12   that with you, and I thank you for that. I think that was
13   an important statement. My community is diverse. As you
14   well may have heard, the Congressional Black Caucus has been
15   working extensively with Google and other search engines to
16   recognize there are not enough individuals of diversity and
17   African Americans.
18   My district has a huge number of musicians, artists
19   and creators from all areas of entertainment. I'd be
20   interested in what efforts are being taken by Google's
21   platform, YouTube, to promote diversity inclusion with its
22   employees. What are the demographics of YouTube's U.S.
23   employees and also, how is YouTube currently distributing
24   resources for U.S. diversity, but the focuses on diversity.
25   What are you doing? YouTube is a great message and there is

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1   a whole population growing of diverse persons, including
2   African Americans.
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Diversity is an area where --
4   where we are very committed to. YouTube, as you
5   highlighted, it is a platform where, as we reach out to
6   content creators, we want to ensure there is diverse
7   perspectives. And we do reach out to minority communities
8   and we engage with them, to make sure they have a voice on
9   the platform. It's something we are committed to doing.
10   As a company, we are -- we've been undertaking a
11   lot of work. We were one of the first to publish a
12   transparency report. We publish our representation numbers
13   externally. There is a lot more work left to do. We
14   acknowledge that, but it's an area, I know, we've engaged
15   with the Congressional Black Caucus and we're committed to
16   doing more.
17   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: Let me invite you to
18   Texas and the 18th Congressional District on these very
19   important issues, and I'd like to work with Google, as we go
20   forward on some of the many issues that I've raised here
21   today.
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It would be a pleasure to do
23   that.
24   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: I thank you, very
25   much. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to put into the record a

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1   letter from epic.org dated December 10, 2018 as unanimous
2   consent, Mr. Chairman.
3   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Without
4   objection.
5   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: And let me thank the
6   witness for his testimony. Thank you also, for your work.
7   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
8   thanks the gentlewoman. Recognizes the gentleman from
9   California, Mr. Issa for five minutes.
10   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: Thank you, Mr.
11   Chairman. Mr. Pichai, I would like to follow up on some of
12   the gentlemen that came before me on the side of the dais,
13   who talked about the -- the bias. And -- and I know that
14   the gentle lady from Texas and some of the others said there
15   is no bias. But I'd like to -- to pick up where Sheila
16   Jackson Lee just left off, because I think it's important.
17   She used numbers and out -- outcome that she either has or
18   believes exists, to say that you have to do better in the
19   minority community. Do you agree with that?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As a company, we are committed
21   to making sure --
22   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: No, no. But
23   statistically, the outcome that she measures is how she asks
24   you to do better, because your outcome is insufficient
25   relative to the size of her community. Do you agree with

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1   that?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, I interpret it as we
3   today don't have enough representation internally --
4   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: Very good. You got
5   her point. Now, here's the point that I think we're giving.
6   If you measure the outcome such as some of those that were
7   just listed by the gentleman from Texas and Ohio, what you
8   find is that there is an appearance of bias, including,
9   quite frankly, the outcome of search engines. Even the
10   question of whether if I pay for advertising and my
11   democratic opponent pays for advertising, the -- if the
12   characteristic of what we happen to search for somehow is
13   more expensive, if you're trying to get conservative than
14   Republican, those are outcome events.
15   Will you commit to look in the case of political
16   potential, political bias in all aspects of your very large
17   company, to look at the outcome, measure the outcome and see
18   if, in fact there is evidence of bias using that. And then
19   work backwards, to see if some of that can be evened to what
20   would appropriately be the outcome? Do you see my point
21   there?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I understand. We
23   don't want any -- while I'm confident we don't approach our
24   work -- work with any political bias, I -- I think it's
25   important to me that we always look at outcomes and we

14 (Pages 50 - 53)

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1   assess to make sure there's no evidence of bias.
2   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: And -- and the reason
3   I give you this point, for most of my adult life, there have
4   been laws on the book to stop the events that Ms. Jackson
5   Lee speaks of. We have had laws to protect minority
6   communities. We have had laws to protect against
7   segregation and bias. And yet, there are measurements that
8   are still being used, including, quite frankly, we create
9   districts that are dedicated to minorities in this country
10   under federal orders, because of a history or a measurement
11   of outcome.
12   And I would ask you to -- to seriously come back,
13   commit to measure. And when you find an outcome that is
14   inconsistent with that which would be ordinarily
15   predictable. I mean, we are two parties relatively tied in
16   the outcome of elections on a global -- on a national basis.
17   If that outcome doesn't come out similar, then, in fact, you
18   have the evidence to work backwards and see if, in fact,
19   policies can be found which are causing that artificially.
20   And which, by the way, might include an overzealous
21   liberal crowd that simply spends more time trashing
22   Republicans than vice versa. That might be what you find,
23   but unless you look at the outcome, you're always going to
24   say, well, we seem to be fair, but the outcome measured by
25   my colleagues will, in fact, not work out.

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I -- I think it's
2   a valid point. I appreciate it and happy to engage more and
3   follow up on it.
4   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: Thank you. I want to
5   get through just two more quick things. In your opening
6   statement and in the questions you've asked, you have talked
7   about turning off location and other data collection. And
8   there are two things that I'm concerned about. Can you
9   commit, as you go through generation 15, 16, 17 of your
10   software, to improve the dashboard, the transparency and the
11   tools available to teach people how to protect their
12   privacy, how to offload data, how to, in fact, turn off
13   things they may not want to have, in order to gain privacy?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It's an area we want to do
15   better. You know, I want to acknowledge as -- as the
16   company has grown a lot, you know, there is -- there is
17   complexity, and, you know, it's something I do think we can
18   do better. You know, more than other com -- we do today,
19   show clear dashboards with the data and give controls, but
20   we want to simplify it, make it easy for average users to
21   navigate these settings and -- and it's something we are
22   working on.
23   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: And I will tell you,
24   each time I try to turn it on and off, refreshing my memory
25   is a pain, because there is no simple place to go to find

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1   out how to do it. But the reality is, I agree, that you do
2   have a dashboard; most don't. I ask unanimous consent now
3   that an article from The Wall Street Journal, October 8th of
4   2018, be placed in the record.
5   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Without
6   objection.
7   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: And in that article,
8   it talks about that the user data be -- breach, and it also
9   makes us aware that there's a memorandum at Google, and that
10   memorandum has been requested by multiple members of
11   Congress, including Senator Thune. Would you commit to
12   provide that memorandum to Congress, so that we can know
13   more about the internal workings related to this breach?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, I'm happy to have my
15   office follow up on it. I'm not fully aware of all the
16   specifics there, but definitely I can commit to following up
17   with your office on it.
18   REPRESENTATIVE DARRELL ISSA: Thank you. Thank
19   you, Mr. Chairman. Yield back.
20   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Chair,
21   thanks the gentleman. Recognizes the gentleman from
22   Tennessee, Mr. Cohen, for five minutes. Thank you, Mr.
23   Chair. Howdy.
24   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: First, I'd like to
25   follow up what Mr. Issa was talking about. I use your

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1   apparatus often or your -- your search engine, and I don't
2   understand all of the different ways that you can turn off
3   the locations. There's so many different things. Have you
4   considered having an online school that people could go to,
5   with a Google rep and you could, kind of, login and kind of
6   ask questions or have Google. And -- and not like Comcast,
7   where you get put on hold for 30 minutes and then find
8   somebody who you can't understand. Something easy to talk
9   to somebody and say, how do I do this or that?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we're constantly
11   looking for better ways to do it. One of the areas is
12   giving online tutorials. And we haven't specifically looked
13   at an option like that, but I'm happy to take that feedback.
14   Today, we do remind people of privacy checkups, and we walk
15   them through a flow. Around 20 million people come to it
16   every day. And so we do --
17   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: That's online, though?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's online.
19   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: But it -- but you
20   don't have individuals? I find it's a lot easier to talk to
21   somebody and go, this is what I want, because the other
22   thing is frustrating. But if you could look at -- into
23   that, I think would help. Privacy is something I think many
24   people, and myself included, are interested in, but
25   sometimes it's difficult to use the -- the device to get

15 (Pages 54 - 57)

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1 that.
2 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Definitely.
3 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: You said that you can
4 turn off your location history, but that still your IP
5 address will track your information; is that correct?
6 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: All I meant, not just common to
7 Google. Today, many internet companies do collect and
8 sometimes store IP information for security reasons. For
9 example, we need to know the language in which we serve your
10 search results. There may be some location information, you
11 know, in there. Location turns out to be in the fabric of
12 how people use internet today.
13 I do think it's important there is legislation in
14 this area. As a company, we want to try and simplify things
15 and be state of the art, but it is a complex area. We
16 realize we need to do better, and we're working on it.
17 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: A question about
18 Russia. In recent months, authoritarian regimes, most
19 prominently Vladimir Putin's regime in Russia, which seems
20 to have first place. They're the Heisman winner of that.
21 Have used bots to manipulate YouTube's algorithms into
22 restricting the accessibility of online content from
23 Democratic and human rights activists --
24 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Would --
25 would the gentleman suspend.

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1 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: Sure.
2 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
3 individual who has --
4 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: Stop the clock,
5 please.
6 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: --
7 provided us with a poster, will remove that immediately from
8 the room or the --
9 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: Could we have the
10 doors closed? Could we have the doors closed?
11 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Capitol
12 Police will escort the gentlemen out of the building.
13 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: I feel like I'm at a
14 USC football game in Shevarim (phonetic.)
15 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE:
16 Absolutely. The gentlemen is recognized.
17 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: And I get 20 more
18 seconds, right? Yes, without objection. All right.
19 So in recent months, authoritarian regimes, most
20 prominently Vladimir Putin's regime in Russia have used bots
21 to manipulate YouTube's algorithms into restricting the
22 accessibility of online content from Democratic and human
23 rights activist by piling up tens of thousands of artificial
24 dislikes to their videos.
25 I'm aware human rights activists had met with

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1 representatives of Google to discuss this problem and find a
2 way of amending the algorithms to prevent this abuse by
3 authoritarian regimes, but so far, no systemic solution has
4 been found. YouTube is the main platform for Democratic and
5 human rights activists in authoritarian countries, where the
6 mainstream media are controlled by the governments.
7 This results in YouTube algorithms, as they
8 currently operate, putting up barriers to the distribution
9 of such content. What is YouTube and Google currently doing
10 to address this problem?
11 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, both YouTube and
12 Google are really committed to freedom of expression. We do
13 want to be a platform by which people can get their messages
14 out and -- and -- and we work hard to do that. And, you
15 know, I'm not sure of all the specifics in that particular
16 case, but happy to follow up, but in general, we work hard.
17 We operate around the world. Part of the reason we do it
18 is, so that we can be a platform by which people can get
19 their messages out and -- and including human rights
20 activists.
21 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: But there is the --
22 there are ways that bots could influence the algorithm by
23 going in and disliking or whatever; is that not right?
24 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, throughout our
25 systems, we deal with, you know, spam bots and bots of many,

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1 many kinds. It's what we've worked hard over 20 years to
2 make sure we can counter. We have several measures in
3 place. We deduct these activities, and we respond strongly.
4 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: All right. To follow
5 up on this, should I talk -- I heard on television this
6 morning, MSNBC said you have almost 200 lobbyists, and it's
7 amazing that they all look like Ed on. But -- but should I
8 just talk to one of the tons and ask him to get with you on
9 this issue?
10 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We'll definitely have our
11 office follow up. Yeah.
12 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: Thank you, sir. And,
13 by the way, as far as MSNBC would be a news -- I mean, if
14 you're on MSNBC, wouldn't that be in your news.
15 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Is MSNBC a news provider, is
16 that your question.
17 REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: Yeah. So, if you --
18 like, I put my name in here, Rep. Steve Cohen, I punch news.
19 This weekend, I was on MSNBC four times, and yet the first
20 thing that comes up is The Daily Caller. Not exactly a
21 liberal, but I guess well known group. Then's Roll Call,
22 then Breitbart News, then The Memphis Business Journal, then
23 Breitbart news, then Breitbart. So it looks like you are
24 overly using conservative news organizations on your news,
25 and I'd like you to look into over use of conservative news

16 (Pages 58 - 61)

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1 organizations to put on liberal people's news on Google.
2 And if you'd let me know about that, I'd appreciate it.
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we do get consents
4 across both sides of the aisle. You know, I can -- I can
5 assure you, we do this in a neutral way, and we do this
6 based on the specific keyword, what we are able to assess
7 the most relevant information.
8   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE COHEN: And I'm sure you try
9 to, but it's hard for me to fathom being on MSNBC for like
10 eight minutes each show, four times and there's -- there's
11 more content on Breitbart News than MSNBC. That might say
12 something about -- well, I'm not going to say that. Scary.
13 Thank you, sir.
14   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Chair
15 recognizes the gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Jordan, for five
16 minutes.
17   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman. Mr. Pichai, in your opening statement you said, I
19 lead this company without political bias and work to ensure
20 that our products operate that way. Eliana Murillo is
21 Google's head of multicultural marketing. Does Ms. Murillo
22 do good work.
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'm not directly familiar with
24 her work, but she's an employee of Google and, you know, we
25 are proud of our employees.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Well, you appraised her
2 work the day after the 2016 election. In a four page email,
3 she wrote about her work with the Latino vote. She said,
4 "even Sundar gave our effort a shout out." Is she referring
5 to you there?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: She was referring to my
7 communication around translation for a different related
8 effort.
9   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Okay. Well, I'm going
10 to look at two other sentences she had in that long email,
11 again, recapping her work in the 2016 election with the
12 Latino vote. She said this, "We pushed to get out the
13 Latino vote with our features." A few lines down in her
14 email, she qualified that sentence and she said, "We pushed
15 to get out the Latino vote with our features, in key
16 states." And she specifically cites the states, Florida and
17 Nevada.
18   Near the end of her email in a similar sentence,
19 she says, "We supported partners, like Voto Latino to pay
20 for rides to the poles, in key states." With me? I want to
21 kind of analyze those two sentences. "We pushed to get out
22 the Latino vote with our features, in key states".
23   We supported partners, like Voto Latino, to pay
24 rides to the poles in key states. Is it fair to say the we
25 in both sentences, Mr. Pichai, refers to Google?

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we -- we are very
2 concerned when there are allegations like that. We -- we --
3 our team looked into it --
4   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: I'm not asking you that
5 question. I'm asking you, is it fair to say, the we in both
6 sentences refers to the company Google?
7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As Google, we wouldn't
8 participate in any partisan efforts around any civic
9 process. So --
10   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Okay.
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I don't think so.
12   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: So this is -- so we
13 pushed and we supported partners like Voto Latino to pay for
14 rights in polls in key states, and we pushed to get out the
15 Latino vote during the 2016, election. And how were they
16 getting that done. They were getting that done by,
17 according to Ms. Murillo, you're head of multicultural
18 marketing, by altering your features or configuring your
19 features in such a way and for paying for rides for people
20 to get to the poles; is that an accurate reading of those --
21 and that's all I'm asking. Is that -- is that fair to say
22 what those sentences are talking about?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Not about of all the specifics,
24 but we did look into it. We found no evidence that, you
25 know, there was any activity like that from Google, to this

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1 organization.
2   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: On. So she's not
3 telling the truth.
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: For sure, we didn't find any
5 supporting evidence of any such activity.
6   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: She said she paid for
7 rides to the poles, and they configured their features in
8 such a way, as to get out the Latino vote. And -- and look,
9 look, I actually think that's all okay. Right? I think
10 that -- that that's just a good corporate citizen,
11 encouraging voter participation, encouraging people to
12 participate in our election process. I think, so far, those
13 sentences are just fine. But then there's three words at
14 the end of each sentence, that do cause me real concern.
15   And those three words are, we pushed to get out the
16 Latino vote with our features, in key states. Now,
17 suddenly, it gets political. We supported partners like
18 Voto Latino to pay for rides to the poles, in key states.
19 Now that makes everything different. So I got really just
20 one question for you. Why? Why -- why -- why did Google
21 configure its features and pay for rides to the poles to get
22 out the Latino vote, only in key states?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, necessarily. We
24 found no evidence to substantiate those claims. The only
25 effort we do around elections --

17 (Pages 62 - 65)

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1   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: So you're head of
2   multicultural marketing, who you praised her work in this
3   email, gave her a shout out, was lying when she said you
4   were trying to get out the Latino vote, in key states?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We, today, in the U.S., around
6   elections, we make it -- and this is what users look to us
7   for. Where to register to vote, where to find your nearest
8   polling place, what are the hours they are open and we do --
9   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: That's not what I'm
10   asking.
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: -- do those things effectively.
12   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: I appreciate that, Mr.
13   Pichai and I already -- I already said that's just -- that's
14   being a good -- good corporate citizen. What I'm asking is:
15   Why did you only do it in key states?
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We didn't do any such activity,
17   as Google, on any of these key states. I mean, there are
18   employees, I think they are part --
19   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Did you push to get out
20   the Latino vote, in all states?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As Google, we don't have goals
22   around pushing out to get any particular segment. We don't
23   participate in partisan activities. We engage with both
24   campaigns. We support and sponsor debates across both sides
25   of the aisle, and we provide users with information to get

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1   the election.
2   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Your head of
3   multicultural marketing said you were pushing to get out the
4   Latino vote, paying for rides to the pole -- to the poles
5   for the Latino vote, only in key states, and you're saying
6   that's not accurate?
7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, that's right. We haven't
8   found any evidence to substantiate --
9   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: So she just made it up
10   out of thin air the day after the election and wrote this
11   email to your top executives and it's not true?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I'm happy to
13   follow up, but I think she -- the employees today, do their
14   own activities --
15   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: I don't want the
16   follow-up. I want the real answers, right here in this
17   committee.
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As I said earlier, we've looked
19   into it. We didn't find --
20   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Did you push to get out
21   the key vote and -- and I -- I would say the two most
22   populous states for -- for Latinos would be California and
23   Texas. Did you push to get out the Latino vote and pay for
24   people to go to the polls, in California and Texas?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We as a company didn't have any

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1   effort to push out works for any particular demographic.
2   That would be against our principles. We participate in the
3   civic process in a -- in a -- in a nonpartisan way, and --
4   and we think it's really important we do it that way.
5   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Well, I just think it's
6   interesting. Mr. Chairman, I know I'm over time, but I
7   think it's interesting, that their head of multicultural
8   marketing writes an email the day after the election, where
9   she talks about 71 percent of Latino votes voted for
10   Hillary, but that wasn't enough. And she talks about paying
11   for rides to the poles, in key states for Latino votes. To
12   get out the Latino vote in key states and the head of the
13   company says that's not accurate.
14   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The time
15   of the gentleman has expired. The witness may answer the
16   question.
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Chairman, I think it's
18   important for us and we're happy to follow up with the
19   congressman there and we haven't found any evidence to
20   substantiate those allegations --
21   UNKNOWN SPEAKER: -- just gave it to you.
22   REPRESENTATIVE JIM JORDAN: Does Ms. Murillo still
23   work for the company?
24   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The time
25   has expired.

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It's -- it's my understanding
2   she does. Yes, sir.
3   UNKNOWN SPEAKER: There you go.
4   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
5   recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Johnson, for five
6   minutes.
7   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: Thank you. Mr.
8   Pichai, have you ever heard talk of this email that you --
9   you were just asked about, by your head of multi-cultural
10   marketing?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Not at that time, but later,
12   you know, when -- when there was concerns expressed around
13   it, I was made of aware then.
14   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: Is it -- is it true
15   that she sent that email or could that be fake news?
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: My -- my understanding is that
17   there were emails that were sent, like the congressman
18   referred to.
19   UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Oh, they get a straight answer.
20   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: But it's your
21   testimony today, that Google did not configure its features
22   to get out the Latino vote, in key states?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't build partisan
24   features or features with any goals around affecting
25   elections in those ways. We mainly focus our efforts on

18 (Pages 66 - 69)

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1 helping people register to vote and our, you know, we -- we
2 reach uses across The United States. So anytime we do these
3 efforts, informing people where to vote, these are used in a
4 very distributed way, widely across the entire country.
5   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: All right. Thank
6 you, sir. And Google's collection and use of consumer's
7 data and its record of protecting consumers and their data
8 are appropriate areas of congressional oversight. But
9 sadly, this committee has neglected consumer protection as
10 an area of oversight, choosing instead to squander their
11 oversight responsibility and use its power, so as to bully
12 Google and other technology companies into minimizing
13 negative news and comments about Republicans and most
14 importantly, the Trump administration.
15   Yesterday Google disclosed that private profile
16 data of over 52 million users may have been exposed. I
17 understand that you're phasing out the Google Plus platform,
18 but many Americans trust your email platform and countless
19 other products with their personal information. And you
20 admit that you collect private data for use in advertising.
21 How can we be assured, considering this new breach, that the
22 personally identifiable information of consumers is safe
23 with you?
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's an important
25 question. This is why we undertake all these efforts. We

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1 do operate important products like Gmail. The reason, you
2 know, building software inevitably has bugs associated as
3 part of the process. We actually undertake a lot of efforts
4 to find bugs, and so we find it, we root it out, and we fix
5 it. And that's how we constantly make our systems better.
6 And, you know, the biggest area of risk we normally, you
7 know, we see for our users is around security. That, you
8 know, their account gets hacked or something. That's why we
9 work hard.
10   Gmail is an area where we have invested a lot. We
11 have an advanced protection program. I would encourage
12 members of the Congress to sign up for it, if you're using
13 Gmail. It allows the second layer of protection to your
14 account, which makes it, you know, much, much harder to get
15 your account, you know, misappropriated in any way.
16   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: All right. Thank
17 you. Yesterday, The New York Times published an in depth
18 investigation of your location tracking applications, that
19 sell purportedly identified or excuse me, personally
20 identified data. Google has said that it doesn't sell data,
21 but as a corporation deeply involved in the business of
22 consumer data use in advertising, your company benefits from
23 applications that track consumer locations.
24   How do you differentiate what Google does with
25 geolocational data from companies with applications that

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1 track and sell the data?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, as a company, we do
3 not sell user data. That would be against our principles
4 and how we --
5   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: Well, how do you
6 differentiate what you do with the geolocation data from
7 companies that do sell the data? How do you -- how do you
8 differentiate what you do with that data versus what these
9 applications that do track and sell the data do?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: An important source of
11 differentiation, we -- we do not and would never sell user
12 data. We do give consumers preferences about how their data
13 is used for advertising. Most of our user experience are --
14 we make our advertising relevant based on the keywords you
15 type, and that's where we get most of our information. We
16 do, you can just type in control your ad settings into
17 Google, and you can actually change, you know, the use of
18 your personal data for advertising, as well. We allow that
19 ss an option for our users.
20   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: As my time expires,
21 let me ask you: Do you believe Google has done enough to be
22 transparent in its data collecting policies?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we -- we always think
24 there's more to do. It's an area which is going to be an
25 ongoing area of effort for us, but we have invested a lot

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1 over the years, and we do make it very transparent and we
2 encourage uses to go check it out. And, in fact, every day
3 20 million uses go and check it. And over the last month,
4 around a 170 million users did check it, but we're going to
5 continue and invest more in this area.
6   REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: Thank you. I yield
7 back.
8   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
9 recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Po, for five
10 minutes.
11   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
12 I'm over here on this side. I have an iPhone and if I move
13 from here and go over there and sit with my Democrat
14 friends, which will make them real nervous, does Google
15 track my movement? Does Google, through this phone, know
16 that I have moved here and moved over to the left? It's
17 either yes or no.
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Not by default. There may be a
19 Google service which you've opted into use. And if --
20   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: So, Google knows that I am
21 moving over there? It's -- it's not a trick question. You
22 know, you make a $100 million a year, you ought to be able
23 to answer that question. Does Google know, through this
24 phone, that I am moving over there and sit next to Mr.
25 Johnson, which would make him real nervous? It's his

19 (Pages 70 - 73)

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1 question. It's yes or no.
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I wouldn't be able to answer it
3 without looking at --
4   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: You can't say yes or no?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Without knowing more details,
6 sir.
7   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: If I walk over there and
8 sit next to Mr. Johnson and carry my phone, does Google know
9 that I was sitting here and then I moved over there?
10   UNKNOWN SPEAKER: You're welcome anytime, judge.
11   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: Yes or no.
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I -- I generally don't know
13 without knowing what services --
14   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: I'm shocked you don't
15 know. I -- I think Google obviously does. Are you familiar
16 with the General Data Protection Regulation by The European
17 Union?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Very familiar. We worked over
19 18 months on it.
20   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: And The European Union is
21 protecting the right of privacy of the people in Europe. We
22 don't have such a law in The United States, do we?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we have supported
24 and --
25   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: We do not have such a law

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1 in The United States, do we?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't have a comprehensive
3 user data privacy that is --
4   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: Are you familiar with
5 House Resolution 1039? It's a resolution that I've
6 introduced that would basically adopt some of the European
7 practices in America and give consumers in The United States
8 the right of privacy. Are you familiar with that
9 legislation?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: No, but I'm --
11   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: I'll give you a copy
12 before you leave. It -- it's ironic to me, that The United
13 States supposed to be the -- the country in the world that
14 protects privacy of individuals more than anybody else. We
15 are playing second fiddle to the Europeans. They protect
16 the privacy of their folks more than we do and I think the
17 United States Congress needs to move in a direction to -- to
18 allow citizens to opt in to the dis -- dissemination of
19 their information rather than opt out, which seems to be the
20 current law.
21   As Mr. Cohen has stated, I think most Americans
22 don't know all the things that this phone can do. And one
23 thing that it can do is disseminate information really, that
24 we are unaware of, to all different people out there. The
25 United States should change the rules and make it so that

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1 we, as consumers, opt in. Otherwise, that information is
2 not disseminated. That is just -- just my opinion.
3   What does Google view as objectionable?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I think there are -- if you're
5 referring to our content policies, we do -- we do publish,
6 there are areas, for example, categories for YouTube like
7 violent extremism, pornography, child safety, fraudulent
8 activities. So, we define categories.
9   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: What are extreme political
10 views? You -- you find those objectionable? I'm not saying
11 you shouldn't. I'm just saying what are those extreme
12 political views?
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't. We think it's
14 important. Google and YouTube are platforms which are --
15 which support freedom --
16   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: So what are those extreme
17 political views that you find objectionable?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't define any political
19 views as objectionable.
20   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: So you let all political
21 views come on, even objectionable political views?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have areas which we have
23 defined as -- as -- as not allowed on our platforms, for
24 example, on YouTube, that are clear definitions around hate
25 speech. Where it's defined as speech which has the primary

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1 goal of inciting hated or violence towards groups of people.
2   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: You would agree that hate
3 speech has many different definitions, depending on who's
4 doing the defining, wouldn't you agree?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We -- we understand it's a
6 subjective area, could be open to interpretation, but we
7 define it and we publish our definition of it. And we --
8   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: Do you believe that
9 Google, has been -- has been brought out here in some
10 question is biased.
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's really
12 important to me that we approach our work in an unbiased --
13   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: Do you believe that Google
14 is biased. It's either yes or no?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: No. Not in our approach.
16   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: It is a private company,
17 is it not?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, it is.
19   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: It's not the government?
20 Google is not the government, is it?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Not -- the last I a checked,
22 no.
23   REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: Do you want the government
24 to regulate Google?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Today, we are subject to a lot

20 (Pages 74 - 77)

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1 of regulation across many different agencies.

2 REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: But you're not subject to

3 the definition of what bias is, by the government coming in

4 and saying, Google cannot be biased and we the government

5 are going to decide what's bias and what's not bias. You're

6 not subject to that philosophy, are you?

7 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: No, not today.

8 REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: I hope we don't get to

9 that point, where government tries to come in and -- and

10 regulate what bias is. And because it is -- this is a -- an

11 independent free company. I think that -- that is, you

12 know, Google may have -- to me, it's just a part of doing

13 business, like any other media outlet. They can say what

14 they want. I've gone over time, Mr. Chairman. I have some

15 other questions I'd like to submit for the record.

16 REPRESENTATIVE HANK JOHNSON: Well, Mr. Chairman,

17 if -- if I might, the gentleman is certainly welcome to join

18 me on this side of the aisle and switch parties, at any

19 time.

20 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: It's

21 getting a little late in his career to do that.

22 REPRESENTATIVE TED POE: That's right.

23 UNKNOWN SPEAKER: It's never to late.

24 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: I -- I

25 will just respond to the gentleman from Texas and say, that

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1 we will be submitting questions in writing to you, Mr.

2 Pichai, including the ones from the gentleman from Texas,

3 and we would ask that you answer them promptly.

4 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I would be very happy to.

5 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you,

6 very much. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from

7 Florida, Mr. Deutsch for five minutes.

8 REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Thank you, Mr.

9 Chairman. Mr. Pichai, I believe that the platforms can and

10 should do a better job preventing people from using services

11 to engage in illegal activity. Tim Cook recently said,

12 platforms and algorithms that promise to improve our lives

13 can actually magnify our worse human tendencies. Some of

14 your peers are publicly reckoning with the ways their

15 companies are not neutral platforms and are accountable for

16 the content on the services.

17 In congressional testimony, Mark Zuckerberg said

18 his company is responsible for the content on its platform.

19 In a Washington Post interview, Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi,

20 she said, we have to stand for the content of our platforms.

21 We can't just say we're a platform and our job is done. Mr.

22 Pichai, will you in front of our committee this morning,

23 join your peers and affirm that Google is accountable for

24 the content on your platforms?

25 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We are -- we have a commitment

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1 to our users to provide accurate and trustworthy

2 information, high quality information.

3 REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Your response --

4 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: And we work hard to uphold

5 those commitments.

6 REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: I'll -- I'll take that

7 as a yes. I want to return to the privacy discussion that's

8 gone on. And I, Mr. Pichai, I went to the -- to do a

9 privacy checkout while we were sitting here. And you're

10 right, it's -- it's quite good. But I want to talk about

11 what it does and what it doesn't do and -- and perhaps you

12 can help me work through this a bit.

13 I -- on my settings now on -- on Google, my

14 location history is paused. My device information is

15 paused. My voice and audio activity are paused. My YouTube

16 watch history is paused. That's probably a good thing. And

17 my YouTube search history is paused. That said, it doesn't

18 mean that you're not collecting data on me, does it?

19 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I think if you -- for those

20 categories, if you pause it, we stop collecting --

21 REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: No, I understand. But

22 overall, it doesn't mean that you're not -- you've stopped

23 collecting data. You're still collecting data on search.

24 You're still collecting data in ways that can -- that can

25 help advertising and help provide the services that you

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1 provide. I appreciate that. My question is this. I wanted

2 to focus also on The New York Times article about the --

3 what they refer to as, the mobile location industry.

4 And -- and I -- I understand the way that data is

5 collected. When you talk on your website about -- about

6 searching Google, getting directions for maps, you watch --

7 watching videos on YouTube. You collect data to make

8 services work better. I understand that, but data is also

9 collected to use in advertising. And according to The New

10 York Times story, it's a hot market.

11 Sales of location targeted advertising reaching an

12 estimated $21 billion this year. It talks about your

13 company and Facebook dominating the mobile ad market, that

14 also lead in location based advertising. And it says that

15 Google also receives precise location information from apps

16 that use its ad services.

17 Can you explain that to me? Is -- is The New York

18 Times saying that, if there is any company that uses your ad

19 services, and given the dominant place that you play in --

20 in advertising, that would be, I would imagine, most. If

21 there is any company that uses your advertising, then that

22 data that they collect would also be available to you?

23 Ultimately, the data they collect on me, is the question I'm

24 asking?

25 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: So we as a company and, you

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1 know, we have commitments to you. We view data as belonging
2 to users. We are stewards of it. So we don't transmit
3 personal data to advertises, if I understand --
4   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: I understand that. I'm
5 asking about the -- I'm asking about the data that
6 companies -- because the -- The New York Times said that --
7 that Google receives precise location information from apps
8 that use its ad services. My question is do you receive
9 information -- is The New York Times right? Do you receive
10 information about the locations that I travel from -- from
11 companies who use your advertising service?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, I -- I just want to
13 make sure I understand the specifics, but there may be
14 information. So, for example, if we're providing an ad
15 and -- and let's say it's for a restaurant. We normally
16 would do it in a location near you, so that it's relevant
17 for you. You have a -- you have an option to turn the
18 setting off. But if it is, since we are providing that
19 information, we would be aware of it and it's not coming
20 from the company to us, but --
21   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Yeah, but -- no, no.
22 But that's what the -- that's what I want to understand.
23 If -- if the ad, if a company uses your advertising, does
24 their location sharing get to you? And here's why, let me
25 just -- because I don't have a lot of time. The Times talks

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1 about the information isn't tied to someone's name or phone
2 number. Your person -- personal information, as you define
3 it, seems to be name, email address and billing information.
4   The question a lot of us have, Mr. Pichai, I think
5 you can sense is, that while that may be personal
6 information and you treat that -- and you treat that the way
7 we would expect. That there is a lot of information about
8 where we go and where we are at any moment that can, as the
9 Times points out, allow someone with access to the raw data,
10 including employees or clients, to identify a person without
11 their consent, by following someone they knew, pinpointing a
12 phone that regularly spent time at that person's home
13 address. Can you use the locations that people go to
14 identify, to back into who a person is? You wouldn't do it,
15 but could someone else do the same thing?
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We wouldn't do that without
17 user -- explicit user consent. To answer your question, you
18 know, I -- I'm happy to follow up. I want to make sure I
19 address that specific question. I think, at a high level, I
20 would say location is turning out to be an important area.
21 As we considered privacy legislation, I, you know, I think
22 it's important we give location protection for our users.
23 As a company, we want to lead the way, and we are --
24   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Mr. Pichai, I
25 understand. And I have to -- just one last question, Mr.

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1 Chairman.
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The time
3 of the gentleman has expired. The Chair recognizes the
4 gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Marino.
5   REPRESENTATIVE TOM MARINO: Thank you, chairman,
6 and thank you for being here. All of you. Let me start out
7 by saying that, sir, you and the office of your company, I
8 think particularly you, because you -- you are at the helm,
9 have a tremendous responsibility. Responsibility towards
10 your employees, responsibility towards your stockholders, to
11 your company, to providing jobs and we thank you for
12 providing jobs. But I think you also have a much more
13 awesome responsibility to the American people, to make sure
14 that you educate accurately, to make sure that you stay in
15 the middle of the road.
16   Because I've learned this over the years as a
17 prosecutor and then more so, as a member of Congress. There
18 is a lot of people who believe everything that's put out by
19 anyone. We -- we're a 10 second society now and we can't
20 hold conversations. We can only read, you know, 10 or 12
21 words, and that's supposedly the gospel. You have a
22 responsibility to see that the truth is out there, and I
23 will hold you to doing that.
24   I don't believe in the government taking control or
25 defining, as my friend, the judge says, what is right and

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1 what is wrong. I for one, the less federal government in my
2 life, the better. So I am depending on you and companies
3 like your company to help us along the lines, because if the
4 federal government does ever step in to regulate, you're not
5 going to like it. And with that said, I have a concern
6 concerning China.
7   In 2010, Google left the Chinese marketplace due to
8 concerns over hack -- hacking attacks, censorship and how
9 the Chinese government was possibly gaining access to data.
10 I'm interested in what has changed since 2010 and how
11 working with the Chinese government to censor research
12 results are part of Google's core values. Do you understand
13 my question?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we -- right now
15 there are no plans for us to launch a search product in
16 China. We are, in general, always looking to see how best,
17 it's part of our core mission and our principles to try hard
18 to provide users with information. We -- we always have
19 evidence based on every country we've operated in, us
20 reaching out and giving users to more information has a very
21 positive impact, and -- and we feel that calling. But right
22 now there are no plans to launch in China. To the extent
23 that we -- we ever, you know, approach a decision like that,
24 I -- I will be fully transparent, including with
25 policymakers here and -- and engage and consult widely.

22 (Pages 82 - 85)

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1   REPRESENTATIVE TOM MARINO: Am I then to understand
2   that there's -- you have no plans to enter into any
3   agreements with China concerning Google, how it's used in
4   China?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We currently do not have a
6   search product there and so, you know, we --
7   REPRESENTATIVE TOM MARINO: Do you plan on having a
8   search product there?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Right now. There are no plans
10   to launch a search product in China.
11   REPRESENTATIVE TOM MARINO: Okay. Let -- let me
12   ask it this way. If, in the future, you decide to do that,
13   what information would you share with the Chinese concerning
14   other users, other countries?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Anytime we look to operate in a
16   country, I mean, we -- we would, you know, we would look at
17   what -- what the conditions are to operate. There are times
18   in the past, we have debated the conditions to operate
19   and -- and we explore a wide range of possibilities.
20   Currently, it is an effort, only internally for us. We --
21   we are not doing this in China. And so, you know, but I'm
22   happy to consult back and be transparent when we actually
23   plan something there.
24   REPRESENTATIVE TOM MARINO: I'm sure you are aware
25   that right now, there are thousands and maybe hundreds of

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1   thousands, of people that the Chinese government has on
2   computers trying to hack in the U.S. and any other
3   countries. Same thing taking place, to a lesser degree,
4   in -- in Russia, simply because of the population. What --
5   what can Google do to help curtail that, if not eliminate
6   countries from hacking into other countries?
7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As a company, we have faced
8   significant attacks before. So, you know, protecting the
9   security of our users is what really keeps me up at night.
10   And it's something we invest a lot over the years. We work
11   with law enforcement, because we rely on their intelligence
12   to help us assess threats. But it's a comprehensive effort
13   and -- and it's something we take seriously.
14   REPRESENTATIVE TOM MARINO: Thank you. I yield
15   back, but remember the responsibility that I think you have.
16   The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California, Ms.
17   Bass, for five minutes.
18   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
19   And thank you for coming today. I wanted to follow up on
20   some questions that were asked of you earlier, specifically
21   the use of bots by authoritarian regimes and also the use of
22   troll farms by Russia. And wanted to know if you could be
23   more specific in terms of how Google is going to respond.
24   In other words, will you expand your staff or modify the
25   algorithms in an effort to identify and -- and eradicate the

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1   online trolls? And then in terms of the flooding that takes
2   place with bots, what specifically will you do to address
3   this?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: This is something we actually
5   face across the set of products we do today. Be it our ad
6   systems, be it our search products, people are trying to
7   spam and be -- be it YouTube and so on. So in general,
8   we've built systems over the years to detect anomalous
9   traffic patents and -- and -- and mitigate that. And we
10   also learn, we collaborate with others. Law enforcement has
11   been very helpful to us in this regard.
12   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: So if the -- so the
13   example of the -- of the bots, where you have -- I mean, I
14   saw one example where there was one day a 125 dislikes and
15   the next day there were 84,000. How do you respond in a
16   situation like that, where it's obviously, it's done
17   purposely?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: So when we see view count
19   manipulation, manipulation of likes, dislikes, and either we
20   get reports or we detect in our systems, spikes in those
21   activities which, you know, which make it clear that it's --
22   it's not humans doing it. You know, we detect it. We treat
23   it as spam or abuse of our systems and --
24   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: So you have staff
25   dedicated to looking at that?

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yeah. Both. We have our
2   algorithms, AI systems and manual reviewers, and -- and we
3   are staffing up our manual reviewers significantly, over the
4   past couple of years. And so we do it comprehensively,
5   across all those things.
6   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: So anticipating what
7   took place in 2016 happening again, and -- and this is
8   specifically regarding what Russia did to foment racial
9   tensions in The United States. And wanting to know how you
10   are responding to that, where they called for, you know,
11   fake protest either to get African Americans to turn out to
12   protest something that was fake or to have a white
13   supremacist be genned up to attack communities of color. So
14   specifically, what is Google doing to respond to that?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We mainly saw, with respect to
16   Russia, limited improper activity on our ad platforms. But
17   in general, we -- you know, we are not a social networking
18   company, across the products we do. It's an area we haven't
19   done well, as a company. So we typically are in connecting
20   groups of people, and that's not how Google mainly works
21   today and so we haven't seen that kind of activities on our
22   platforms. But we are vigilant and, you know, I'm happy to
23   share any findings which come through, as we look into it
24   more.
25   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: So I also wanted to ask

23 (Pages 86 - 89)

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1 you a couple of questions about online creators of color.
2 Where mainstream media outlets often fail to cater to
3 communities of color with relatable content or resolve
4 lingering issues of under representation or
5 misrepresentation. Communities of color have sought out
6 digital mediums to tell their stories, and in some cases
7 this has been very successful, and it's led to larger
8 networks recognizing the talent. And in other cases, it's
9 given a platform to voices that would otherwise be silenced.
10   So I wanted to know what policies Google might be
11 developing to put in place to ensure that the voice of
12 online creators can expand?
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: YouTube has a lot of community
14 outreach programs. We partner with other organizations who
15 do important work in this area. But today, you know,
16 when -- when we look -- look at YouTube, we do see a
17 platform with a very diverse set of perspectives and
18 opinions. It's partly the strength of the platform and --
19 and the reach it provides to voices and --
20   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: Could I get the
21 information about your outreach, specifically who you do
22 outreach to, that would be very helpful, if I could get
23 that.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'd be very happy to do that.
25   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN BASS: And I yield back my

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1 time to Representative Deutch.
2   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Thanks. I -- I thank
3 the -- from California. Mr. Pichai, I just wanted to finish
4 up.
5   Again, I appreciate you being here, and I wanted
6 to -- to follow up on something that the chairman started
7 our hearing with and that was a question about information
8 collected by Google. I think the report that he referred to
9 talked about information collected specifically on Android
10 phones, even if those -- even if those phones aren't on
11 Wi-Fi or -- or the cell service isn't on. Is that something
12 that happens?
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's not clear to
14 me how something, when there's no connectivity would happen,
15 but, you know, so we haven't -- I.
16   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: I'm sorry.
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: So I'm -- I'm aware of those
18 concerns. We -- we haven't been able to substantiate those
19 specific findings.
20   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: You're looking into
21 those findings, though?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: There's an area where we are --
23 you know, our goal is to, you know, we're trying to help
24 users with the information they want. Today there are many
25 cases, users give us feedback. Part of -- part of what

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1 we're trying to do is they want us to be location aware when
2 they --
3   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Mr. Pichai, I
4 understand, but -- but you're not aware of data being
5 collected while the phone is not connected to -- to either
6 cell service or Wi-Fi?
7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yeah, there -- there may be
8 specific instances, for example, GPS may be working. And
9 so, you know, it depends on the specifics, but in general,
10 no.
11   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: And so the -- finally,
12 the question is: If that information is -- if -- if that's
13 possible, if you learn that it is happening, and I would
14 love you to share that with us. If you learn that's
15 happening and the information, then when the cons -- when
16 the customer turns on his, his or her cell service, if that
17 information is then sent back to your company on their data
18 plan. A lot of people obviously have limited data plans.
19   When you look at this, if you could also look at
20 whether, when the information is sent back, to the extent
21 it's happening, that it might cause some people to go over
22 their limits, thereby costing them more on their monthly
23 bill? That would be helpful information, as well.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's good feedback. We will.
25   REPRESENTATIVE TED DEUTCH: Okay. Thank you, Mr.

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1 Chairman.
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
3 recognizes the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Collins, for five
4 minutes.
5   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Thank you, Mr.
6 Chairman and thank you Mr. Pichai, for being here. I --
7 look, there is an understanding. I think it's come across
8 from everyone here and it's -- it's a saying that I've sort
9 of lived by most of my adult life, and I think most people
10 get. Perception is reality.
11   Now you can disagree with the perception. You can
12 disagree with the reality, but at the certain point in time,
13 as you've even heard from many of the folks discussing on
14 both sides of the isle today. There's several perceptions
15 that are going on with what's being stored, what's not being
16 stored and how that is -- or how that data and that privacy
17 issue. And also the effects or the outcomes of the searches
18 are made.
19   Now one of the other issues, not just Google
20 itself, but also YouTube. There's another issue that I will
21 not touch today, but probably will do some questions on, is
22 the issue of content and the issue of how that is stolen in
23 many cases and how that could be worked on. Those are
24 issues we'll deal with in another setting. We've talked
25 about this.

24 (Pages 90 - 93)

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1   But I want to go through several questions because
2 it's been discussed a lot about what you collect and what
3 you don't collect. So the next few questions will be yes/no
4 questions. They're not -- I'm not trying to trick you here.
5 It's simply what do you collect and how do you collect it?
6 Okay?
7   In dealing with Google, do you or do you not
8 collect identifiers like name, age, and address; yes or no?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: If you're creating an account,
10 yes. And using an account, yes.
11   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Yes. Specific search
12 histories when person types something into a search bar?
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: If you have a search history
14 turned on, yes.
15   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Device identifiers
16 like IP address or IMEI?
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Depending on the situation, we
18 could be collecting it, yes.
19   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: GPS signals, Wi-Fi
20 signals, Bluetooth beacons?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, it would -- it would
22 depend on the specifics. So, but there may be situations,
23 yes.
24   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: GPS, yes?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, if you have a --

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1   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Voice and
2 conversations when using Google Voice products?
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We give an option to turn on or
4 off.
5   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: But if -- but if --
6 if a person didn't know it, voice and conversations when
7 using Google Voice products? Yes?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We only record when they
9 initiated with okay, Google and then say the terms after.
10   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Contents of emails
11 and Google documents.
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We store the data, but we don't
13 read or look at your Gmail.
14   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: But you have access
15 to them?
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: As -- as a company, we have
17 access to them, yes.
18   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: So you could? Not
19 saying you don't or don't. I'm not asking do you or don't
20 you. I'm saying you could, though, there is a possibility?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have clear, established
22 policies on how we would do that data.
23   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: And your privacy
24 policies, speaking of that, has changed 28 times, including
25 eight times since January 2016. So I think the policies

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1 are, you know, and this is why I'm asking these questions.
2   Is there any type of or -- any type or origin of
3 data which Google would refuse to collect, that is not
4 already prohibited by laws, like COPPA or HIPAA?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: There are many categories of
6 information today, you know, were particular about anything
7 to do with health data --
8   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Those are covered
9 under those. Anything that you would not collect, outside
10 of the two that I named, which are generally accepted as
11 things you cannot collect?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: There are -- there are many
13 things which we -- we don't collect. For example, we don't
14 collect -- you could have a product like Google home. We
15 won't collect conversations unless you specifically ask us
16 to. So, you ask a question. And so we definitely are very
17 careful and minimize the data we need to provide the service
18 back to our users.
19   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: I'm glad you
20 mentioned data minimization. We'll get to that in just a
21 second. How long do you keep the data that you have
22 captured?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Today, we give you the choice
24 of whether you want to store the data or not. But if you
25 store the data, from the time you turn it on, we store it

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1 for you?
2   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: Okay. Well, let --
3 let me ask a question then. For all this has been the
4 discussed, age identifiers, search histories, all these
5 things. And for the -- how many would you say, let me just
6 say, you -- you've interested -- made a interesting
7 question. How many people actually understand that they can
8 actually cut this off?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we remind the --
10 remind people and every day 20 million people come and make
11 changes in these settings. We see robust activity.
12   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: But when you control
13 95 percent of searches, you control this in a very large
14 way. I would say the vast majority, not the most
15 sophisticated, not the ones in a certain age demographic,
16 are not as familiar with this as, say, some who work in the
17 industry or at least around the industry. Would that not be
18 a fair statement?
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: If you could repeat that,
20 congressman. Sorry, I'm --
21   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: I'll get back to it.
22 Earlier it was said that identifiers such as age, name and
23 address are treated differently. If that is true, how are
24 you treating them differently and is the same data
25 collection process still done? How is it treated

25 (Pages 94 - 97)

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1 differently, than maybe some of these others that we have
2 spoke of that came, I think, from Mr. Deutch's discussions;
3 such as locators and things like that?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We -- we offer different
5 controls for that. So, for example, for location, we give
6 specific controls for your voice -- voice activity. We give
7 specific controls. We're trying to meet user's
8 expectations. And so, for example, some people may want
9 their search history to be available, but they don't want
10 YouTube history to be recorded. So, we give those choices
11 to our users.
12   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: One of the general
13 dynamics of most in this tech industry and those who collect
14 data is data minimization. You brought it up just a few
15 minutes ago. The issue that I have and it was in March of
16 this year, a security researcher actually downloaded his
17 quote, "Google Takeout." This is probably there. It was
18 5.5 Gigabyte. This is not a -- just a few names and
19 addresses and where you went. The -- why, number one, does
20 Google need all this information? We can answer that in the
21 fact that 85 -- 86 percent of your revenue comes from
22 advertising. So we know you manipulate the data in some
23 ways.
24   However, can you explain what you do to minimize
25 this data, which is generally an accepted standard practice

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1 among those who collect data.
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, our goal is, you
3 know, but we are providing, for example, if we are providing
4 you a service like Gmail, which we have done for 15 years,
5 that data, we need to store it for our users. So they
6 expect us to. So we are trying hard to match user's
7 expectations. We don't need, you know, our data for
8 advertising. As I said earlier, most of it comes from just
9 the keywords you type. And so, you know, we need minimal
10 data to do advertising. We give you options to turn ad
11 personalization off. We store most of the data we do today,
12 to help give users the experience they want. And that's
13 what we're trying to do.
14   REPRESENTATIVE DOUG COLLINS: I'm going to go back
15 to where I started, perception is reality. The amount of
16 data being collected here, the how it is being used, how you
17 monetize the one ad, basically the flow of -- of information
18 that you have and the monetization of that, is a concern. I
19 think the perception of how it is used and from what side of
20 the aisle, is something that this committee, I think, will
21 take up and continue to process.
22   But I think when most people deal with this, what I
23 said earlier, I'm not sure that in the broad scope of
24 things, simply clicking, yes, especially in a society today,
25 in which some of these things and especially that was talked

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1 about, mobile, which we've not dealt into even further, is
2 going to open up a much larger situation. Which is not just
3 simply monetizing data, it's actually using information that
4 can be then used by either law enforcement or others in
5 legal proceedings, that can then be used against them, that
6 they're not going to understand exactly what is going on.
7   With that, my time has expired and I'll yield.
8   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Chair,
9 thanks the gentleman. The Chair recognizes the gentleman
10 from Rhode Island, Mr. Cicilline, for five minutes.
11   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Thank you, Mr.
12 Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Pichai, for being here. In 2006,
13 internet pioneer, Vint Cerf testified on behalf of Google,
14 that the open internet was designed so that no central
15 gatekeeper could exert its control to discriminate against
16 rivals, consumers or other businesses. Since then, it's
17 become increasingly clear that this virtuous cycle of
18 innovation is fundamentally threatened by the dominance of a
19 few powerful companies.
20   Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of the worldwide web,
21 made this point clear in an open letter earlier this year,
22 where he warned that the open internet has been compressed
23 under the weight of a few dominant platforms, that have the
24 ability to harm competition and control which ideas and
25 opinions are seen and shared online. Along with 83 percent

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1 of Americans, I strongly support an open, decentralized
2 internet that is free of powerful gatekeepers with the
3 ability to discriminate against rivals, threaten innovation
4 or harm consumers.
5   With that in mind, I'm deeply concerned by reports
6 of Google's discriminatory conduct in the market for
7 internet search. According to findings by The European
8 Commission, Google has harmed the competitive process by
9 favoring its own products and services over rivals, by
10 deprioritizing or delisting competitors' content. And so my
11 first question, Mr. Pichai, is: As a proponent of internet
12 openness, will Google commit to ending the discrimination
13 against rivals and other businesses through Google's
14 products?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, with respect, you
16 know, I disagree with that characterization. We provide
17 users with the best experience they're looking for, the most
18 relevant information, and that's our true north and that's
19 how we approach our products.
20   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: But -- but does
21 that include the use of discriminatory practices? Is that
22 part of your business model?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Definitely not. And, you know,
24 in The European Commission, we are appealing that decision.
25 When they looked at shopping as a category, they excluded

26 (Pages 98 - 101)

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1 Amazon, as a potential entrant in the space. So the
2 specifics matter here. We are interested in providing users
3 with the best information they're looking for, be it from
4 another company and be it from a competitor. That -- that's
5 what we are interested in doing.
6   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Well, I -- I
7 strongly believe in structural antitrust enforcement. I
8 also plan to work with The Federal Trade Commission to
9 develop a legislation to address this type of discriminatory
10 conduct online. Will Google commit to working together with
11 Congress, on legislative proposals designed to ensure that
12 online firms with significant market power are not able to
13 harm the competitive process through discriminatory conduct?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we're happy to engage
15 constructively on -- on legislation around any of these
16 areas.
17   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Thank you. I'd
18 like now to turn to -- to the question of China. Mr.
19 Pichai, the operating environment in China has deteriorated
20 with respect to surveillance, censorship and the like, since
21 Google first made the decision in 2010 to leave. In
22 September, I sent you a letter along with 15 other
23 colleagues raising serious concerns about reports that
24 Google is planning to reenter the Chinese market, with an
25 app based search engine that would likely have to comply

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1 with strict censorship and surveillance requirements imposed
2 by the Chinese government.
3   Since then, a widespread course of opposition to
4 such a move has emerged, including from lawmakers, leading
5 human rights activists and a group of Google's own
6 employees. The -- the environment has deteriorated. Your
7 launching an app in that environment, would seem to be
8 completely inconsistent with Google's recently launched AI
9 principles. Which say, you will not design or deploy
10 technologies who's and I quote "purpose contravenes widely
11 accepted principles of international law in human rights."
12   It's hard for me to imagine you could operate in
13 the Chinese market, under the current government framework,
14 and maintain a commitment to universal values, such as
15 freedom of expression and personal privacy. So I want to
16 ask very specifically: Are any employees currently having
17 product meetings on this -- on this Chinese project? And
18 when -- if not, when did those end?
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have undertaken an internal
20 effort, but right now there are no plans to launch a search
21 service in China. As I said earlier.
22   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Are there any
23 current discussions, with any member of the Chinese
24 government, on launching this app?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Currently, we are not in

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1 discussions around launching a search product in China.
2   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Are there any
3 current discussions with members of the Chinese government
4 about this.
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We, you know, this effort
6 currently is an internal effort, and, you know, I'm happy
7 to, you know, consult, as well as, be transparent to the
8 extent we take steps towards launching a product in China.
9   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: And who at Google
10 is leading the Dragonfly effort?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It's a, you know, our -- our
12 efforts around building search. You know, it's -- it's --
13 it's undertaken by our search teams, but these are
14 distributed efforts. It's a limited effort internally,
15 currently.
16   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Will you, Mr.
17 Pichai, rule out launching a tool for surveillance and
18 censorship in China, while you are CEO of Google?
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I -- I commit to
20 engaging. One of the things which is important to us, as a
21 company, we have a stated mission of providing users with
22 information. And so we always -- we think it's in our duty
23 to explore possibilities, to give users access to
24 information. And, you know, I have that commitment. But,
25 you know, as I said earlier on this, we'll be very

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1 thoughtful and we will engage widely as we make progress.
2   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: Well, I appreciate
3 that and -- and let me be clear. This goes beyond Google
4 and frankly beyond China. At a moment of rising
5 authoritarianism around the world, when more leaders are
6 using surveillance, censorship and repression against their
7 own people, we're in a moment that we must reassert American
8 moral leadership. And I think it's important that, because
9 other countries will look at that relationship.
10   And Mr. Chairman, with that, I'd ask unanimous
11 consent to submit for the record, 15 -- the letter 15
12 colleagues and I sent to Mr. Pichai, his response and a
13 letter from more than 50 human and civil rights
14 organizations opposing the launch of a censored Google
15 search engine for the Chinese market.
16   And would just note, Mr. Chairman, that in the
17 submission of this, for unanimous consent, the NGO letter
18 reports that, and I quote "the Chinese government is
19 actively promoting its model of pervasive, digital
20 censorship and surveillance around the world. Many
21 governments look to China's example, and a major industry
22 leaders acquiescence to such demands will likely cause many
23 other regimes to follow China's lead, provoking a race to
24 the bottom in standards. It would also undermine efforts by
25 Google and other companies to resist governments

27 (Pages 102 - 105)

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1 surveillance requests, in order to protect users privacy and
2 security, emboldening state intelligence and security
3 agencies to demand greater access to user data."
4   So the implications, Mr. Pichai --
5   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
6 gentleman's time has expired. Without objection, it will be
7 added.
8   REPRESENTATIVE DAVID CICILLINE: -- are well beyond
9 China. And I'd ask that they be made a part of the record.
10   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Without
11 objection, so ordered.
12   The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from
13 Florida, Mr. Gaetz.
14   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Thank you, Mr.
15 Chairman. Have you ever launched an investigation into
16 whether political bias is impacting the consumer experience?
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we -- we do -- to
18 the extent there are concerns, we look into them. And, you
19 know --
20   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: So have -- have you
21 expressly launched an investigation into political bias of
22 your employees?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: On our employees, you said?
24   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Yes.
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, to -- to the extent

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1 you know, we always take -- we take any allegations around
2 code of conduct across every issue seriously and we look
3 into them.
4   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: You said to -- to me
5 yesterday, that and -- as it relates to political bias, you
6 haven't launched those investigations, because there are so
7 many redundancies and there is so much peer review, that
8 that would not be possible. Is that still your testimony
9 today?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, you -- it's --
11 it's the -- the way our processes work, if you need to make
12 a change in our algorithms, there are several steps in the
13 process, including launch committees and -- and user testing
14 and our rater guideline evaluation.
15   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: But your company, your
16 employees can get together and chat in groups, right, Google
17 groups?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, they can.
19   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: And one of those groups
20 is the civil rights group, right?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have many employee resource
22 groups on which they can participate in conversations, yes.
23   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Have you ever looked
24 into the conversation into the Resist group?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, no.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Is it -- does that
2 strike -- is that a surprise to you, that there's a Resist
3 group?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'm not aware, whether such a
5 group exists or not.
6   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: If there was a Resist
7 group, would that be the type of thing that you would want
8 to look into?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we have clear
10 policies around how our products are built and --
11   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: If there's a resist --
12 you know, that the Resist movement is a movement built to
13 resist the agenda of President Trump. If there's a Resist
14 group within your company, where groups of employees, not
15 one, are getting together within that group to engage in
16 discourse on company time, with company infrastructure.
17 Does that strike you as the type of thing you would want to
18 investigate?
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I'm not aware of
20 any such group. Nothing like that has been brought to my
21 attention. And, you know, happy to follow up the -- you
22 know, and -- and understand the consent better.
23   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Yeah. Mr. Chairman,
24 I -- I seek unanimous consent to enter into the record, a
25 document from what purports to be a Google employee, Miles

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1 Borens, which is a post to the Google group, Resist.
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Without
3 objection, so ordered.
4   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: I'm also reading now
5 from the discussion that occurred over Breitbart and Google
6 ads. And -- and I'm quoting from one of your employees, who
7 purportedly posted, "anyone want to hold their nose and look
8 through Breitbart.com for hate speech." Why would someone
9 need to hold their nose to do that work?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, today, we have --
11 we have 90,000 employees and they -- they communicate in
12 forums. As a company, we have allowed freedom of expression
13 and we don't stand or condone, you know, comments expressed
14 in these things. We're very clear about our policies as to
15 how we build our products and -- and, you know, we serve our
16 publishers that way.
17   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Well, if -- if you
18 haven't launched an investigation into any of your
19 employees, because it would take a group of employees to
20 engage in improper conduct. And if those groups of
21 employees are engaging in discussion on your platform, and
22 if one of those platform groups is Resist. And if on that
23 Resist movement site or any other sites in your platform,
24 there's discussion of suppressing conservative speech, why
25 would that not be something that you would launch an

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1 internal investigation in, publish the reports, sanction
2 those employees that may or may not be engaged in improper
3 conduct, so that we can all have greater comfort in the --
4 in the user experience.
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, first of all, I
6 want to assure you we have checks and balances, so that
7 employees and we -- not just on this issue, across any
8 issue. We protect the sanctity of our systems, our product
9 development process and we would do that.
10   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: How can I have
11 confidence that you're protecting the sanctity of your
12 system, when you don't even know that your employees are
13 getting together on your own company's infrastructure to
14 talk about political activity.
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: In general, we always assume,
16 our systems are designed. We assume there could be bad
17 intent. So we've designed from first principles because,
18 you know, for security reasons both externally and
19 internally, at any given moment, we -- we assume that
20 somebody may be acting in bad faith. And -- and that's how
21 we have designed our systems with all the protections in
22 place. We need to do that for our security of our systems.
23 And it's a first principles approach.
24   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: So if your assumption
25 is that people can act in bad faith, why then have you not

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1 launched an investigation into the communications that seem
2 to indicate a desire to suppress conservative political
3 movements and conservative voices?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: If there are allegations
5 around, you know, discussions which are specific with the
6 intent of manipulating our products, we would conduct an
7 investigation.
8   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Well that -- that's
9 good to hear. The Wall Street Journal reported that your
10 workers were discussing tweaking search terms to frame the
11 discussion over the travel ban. Did you perform an
12 investigation into that allegation?
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We looked into it. There was
14 no attempt at, you know, anything to influence our products.
15 There are at times, during important news events, important,
16 for example, during events like hurricanes, et cetera. We
17 have a set of tools, crisis response tools. During the
18 travel ban, even the Department of Homeland Security was
19 looking to put out information, because there was some
20 confusion around the event. So there was some discussion
21 around things like that, too. And so --
22   REPRESENTATIVE MATT GAETZ: Well, I -- I would
23 strongly suggest, that one of the crisis response tools that
24 you use, is an investigation into the discourse of your
25 employees on resisting the Trump presidency, resisting the

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1 Trump agenda, and then smothering some of the conservative
2 outlets that seem to amplify that content. And I yield
3 back, Mr. Chair.
4   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Gentlemen
5 yields back. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from
6 California, Mr. Swalwell.
7   REPRESENTATIVE ERIC SWALWELL: Thank you, Mr.
8 Chairman. Welcome, Mr. Pichai. I represent a congressional
9 district in the San Francisco Bay area where a number of my
10 constituents work at Google, and was hoping we could dive
11 into some concerns that I hear from them. But also that I
12 hear from constituents just -- just have concerns about
13 privacy. Does The United States need a national privacy
14 law?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I -- I'm of the
16 view, given how important privacy is, that we are better off
17 with the, you know, more of a single overarching --
18   UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Excuse me. Would you mind moving
19 the microphone in front of your mouth, so we can hear you
20 better. Thank you.
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Thank you. I'm of the opinion
22 that we are better off with -- with more of a overarching,
23 you know, data production framework, which for users, and I
24 think that would be good to do.
25   REPRESENTATIVE ERIC SWALWELL: And -- and, you

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1 know, in Europe just last year they implemented the General
2 Data Protection Regulation known as GDPR, and the goals were
3 for consumers to know, to understand and consent. And would
4 you agree, that if there was a framework in The United
5 States to have a national privacy law, that would be the,
6 you know, critical framework to have know, understand and
7 consent?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we've had quite a bit
9 of experience now working with GDPR, and we've done it for
10 many, many months. And, you know, I think there are -- you
11 know, I think it's a well thought out, crafted piece of
12 legislation. I do think there's some value for companies to
13 have consistent global regulations. I think it's also
14 important for users, as they navigate services globally.
15 And so, I do see value in aligning where we can.
16   REPRESENTATIVE ERIC SWALWELL: Mr. Pichai, as part
17 of Russia's attack on our democracy in 2016, it -- it used
18 ads on your platform, on Facebook's, platform, on Twitter's
19 platform, and money was provided in Rubles and from Russia
20 addresses. What has Google done to make sure this doesn't
21 happen again? And -- and just last week Secretary Mattis
22 confirmed that Russia continued its attack on our democracy
23 in the most recent midterm elections.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, as I said earlier,
25 it's an area where we invest a lot. I mean, we -- we did

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1 see limited, improper activity, and, you know, obviously we

2 learned from that. We've been very transparent with our

3 findings. Leading up over the past couple of years, anytime

4 we have found other activity, you know, which is material,

5 we disclose it, and we are constantly evolving the practices

6 we do. But, you know, I do say our efforts have been pretty

7 successful so far, Google as a whole, through both our

8 election cycles. But it's an area where it's never enough

9 and, you know, so you're constantly vigilant and doing more

10 and.

11   REPRESENTATIVE ERIC SWALWELL: Mr. Pichai, I don't

12 think anyone disagrees that seeing an answer on a results

13 page for certain queries can be useful. For example, if I

14 type in, you know, what is 25 times 15, and Google spits out

15 375, that's useful. But today, you know, if my wife was to

16 search for a pediatrician in Dublin, California, instead of

17 being matched with the most relevant information from across

18 the web, according to Google's algorithms, my wife or any

19 mom would see a map that is powered by Google's ecosystem of

20 local reviews.

21   And in response to claims that Google has put its

22 own results ahead of its competitors, when it's page rank

23 algorithm believes the competitors should be ranked higher,

24 Google has told certain international enforcers that local

25 search results come from a specialized index, which is

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1 distinct from its organic web index. And I was hoping today

2 you could clarify for me, is it technically possible for

3 Google to compare local business content it collects against

4 that of content collected by third party services using a

5 page rank, like quality score?

6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we -- we employ a

7 wide variety of signals. We are interested in providing

8 users. We respond to user feedback. So as a user, you

9 could be on a mobile phone with very limited connectivity.

10 You could be a busy parent on your way and you're checking

11 for some information, maybe trying to find a doctor because

12 your kid is sick. And so we are looking to see how we can

13 get that information to you, as quickly as possible. That's

14 the use case which drives or product development.

15   And -- and if that information is best available

16 from another company, we make it available. There are times

17 we are able to provide that information, because we have

18 better information. And so, we are constantly looking and a

19 and -- and -- and we do that to the best of our ability.

20   REPRESENTATIVE ERIC SWALWELL: Thank you. I yield

21 back.

22   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The

23 gentleman yields back. At this time, The Chair recognizes

24 the gentlemen from Louisiana, Mr. Johnson.

25   REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: Thank you, Mr.

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1 Chairman. Mr. Pichai, we want to thank you for appearing

2 today and for taking the time to answer and -- and meet with

3 us individually, answer our questions. I think you and I

4 both agree it's important for your company and for the

5 people, for us to have this public hearing and to get all

6 this information on the record, so to speak.

7   So as we discussed in my office yesterday, my

8 conservative colleagues and I are fierce advocates of

9 limited government. And we're also committed guardians of

10 free speech and the free marketplace of ideas. We do not

11 want to impose burdensome government regulations on your

12 industry.

13   However, we do believe we have an affirmative duty

14 to ensure that the engine that processes as much as we said

15 today, 90 percent of all internet searches, is never used to

16 unfairly sensor conservative viewpoints or suppress

17 political views.

18   Your challenge today, and in the days ahead, is to

19 convince the members of this body that Google and your

20 industry peers will implement your own sufficient safeguards

21 and solutions to this problem, so that the government

22 doesn't have to intervene.

23   Here -- here's a question. In -- in previous

24 hearings and discussions, Google has described the trusted

25 Flagger program as a source for recommending content be

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1 removed from your platform.

2   Recently Google released a transparency report on

3 content removal which revealed that, out of the 7.7 million

4 automated flag and removals from your platform, YouTube,

5 around 70 percent of that content was removed before it had

6 received any views from the public. Here's the question.

7 How does Google ensure that content removed in the automated

8 process is not merely because of philosophical or political

9 differences.

10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's an important

11 question. As you said, YouTube is committed to being a

12 platform for freedom of expression. And, you know, we -- we

13 go to great lengths to do that. We only handle videos in --

14 in the areas of clearly defined policies we have. We do

15 have automated systems, but, you know, we assess it. We

16 later spot check it, to make sure the system is working as

17 intended. We respond to feedback. As content creators, you

18 can appeal if you think something was removed erroneously.

19   But it's really important to us that we -- we -- we

20 provide a platform for freedom of expression, but enforce

21 the rules of the road on areas where we have said and -- but

22 we are very transparent about the areas and the clear

23 policies with which we do those things.

24   REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: You've spoken a lot

25 today about objectivity. That's the goal. We applaud and

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1 appreciate that. As you know, Alphabet's incubator Jigsaw
2 has introduced Perspective. It's a tool that uses machine
3 learning to filter online discussions for, quote "toxicity"
4 unquote. This to me raises issues of how Google's parent
5 company is using machine learning to filter speech that is
6 viewed as unproductive, such as ad hominem attacks or
7 offensive language or -- or the like.
8   When creating a tool like Perspective, what steps
9 has Google taken to protect conservative viewpoints from
10 being considered toxic by subjective reviewers, as the
11 program progresses?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, Perspective
13 provided by one of our sister organizations, Jigsaw. It's a
14 platform for publishers to use. So the publishers get to
15 define what they want acceptable or not and -- and -- and
16 that's what the tool, you know, provides for them. But
17 I think you point is valid. I mean, we -- we don't want to
18 be in the -- in the position of just editorializing
19 publisher content. And we're just providing a tool for
20 publishers to better drive the content on their platforms.
21   REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: You mentioned the
22 appeals process, if a content provider has their material
23 flagged. How quick does that appeals process work? In
24 other words, what's the review period?
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I think it -- it varies. We

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1 prioritize areas which are sensitive. For example, areas
2 like terrorism is something we prioritized very
3 significantly and higher up in the queue. But we are
4 ramping up our resources and our goal is to do it as soon as
5 possible. But, you know, sometimes it can be a matter of
6 hours. If it's areas around copyright, we have implemented
7 content tidy. We have a system by which we can
8 automatically direct and respond right of way back to
9 copyright owner. So it's -- it's a constant working
10 progress.
11   REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: In -- in the
12 committee's last hearing with Google's Ms. Juniper Downs, we
13 discussed this. I raised the case of the Alliance Defending
14 Freedom's content being removed after being reported by a
15 trusted flagger on YouTube. The -- the flagging
16 organization was the southern -- was the Southern Poverty
17 Law Center, which has kind of an infamous reputation for
18 being, I would say a radical left organization that opposes
19 conservative viewpoints.
20   What criteria does Google use when granting trusted
21 flaggers status to third parties such as the SPLC.
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, today we -- I first
23 want to clarify one thing. Our trusted flaggers don't
24 remove content. They can flag content for us to review
25 and -- and we review flagged content. It's mostly used by

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1 law enforcement, many -- many nonprofit agencies in -- in
2 areas, important areas, like, child safety, terrorism, and
3 so on. Southern Poverty Law Center is a trusted flagger.
4 People can register. Last we've checked, they've never
5 flagged a single video on our platform.
6   We have reached out to a wide variety of
7 organizations, including conservative organizations. We
8 would be happy to take your suggestions to add, you know,
9 organizations as trusted flaggers.
10   REPRESENTATIVE MIKE JOHNSON: I appreciate that.
11 We need a little objectivity in the reviewers and I'll yield
12 back.
13   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
14 gentleman's time has aspired. The Chair now recognizes the
15 gentleman from California, Mr. Lieu.
16   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
17 This is now the fourth hearing in a series of ridiculous
18 hearings on the free speech of internet companies. A
19 significant portion of this hearing was a waste of time,
20 because the First Amendment protects private individuals and
21 corporation's free speech rights.
22   Now, there are things that Google does unrelated to
23 speech that I disagree with, but when it comes to search
24 algorithms, your prioritization, what videos you want to
25 show, the First Amendment protects you. So I'm going to ask

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1 you a series of questions. Some of them are fairly basic
2 and I apologize, but I feel like I have to educate some of
3 my colleagues on how the U.S Constitution works. And feel
4 free to answer yes or no.
5   So my first question is: We here on the judiciary
6 committee are the government and Google is a corporation,
7 correct; yes or no?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes.
9   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: All right. The First
10 Amendment limits what government can do in regulating the
11 content of speech. It does not limit Google, but Google
12 does have to follow corporate laws and other laws. And
13 under those laws, you and your board of directors have a
14 fiduciary duty to your shareholders, correct?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes.
16   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: Okay. And one of the
17 ways that Google generates a profit is when consumers use
18 your search engine, they watch videos, some of them click on
19 ads. They use your applications. Isn't that one way you
20 generate profit?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's one of the business
22 models we use.
23   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: Okay. And if consumers
24 were not getting the search results they wanted or not --
25 not getting the videos they wanted to see, they might start

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1 moving to your competitors; isn't that right?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Every Monday when I run my
3 management meetings, yes, we worry about -- users have a lot
4 of choices. So we work hard to earn their trust every week.
5   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: And so, let's say you
6 figure out that the number one thing users want to see are
7 dog and cat videos. Under the U.S. Constitution, you have
8 the absolute right to promote dog and cat videos. I'm not
9 saying you -- you do that, but you do have the right to do
10 that if you wanted to; isn't that correct?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I -- I'm not the
12 expert on First Amendment, but generally I -- I think that's
13 right.
14   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: I thank you. So, last
15 week when I got noticed we're going to have another one of
16 these hearings, I did a search on Google. I searched for
17 Congressman Steve Scalise. He is a Republican. And I hit
18 the news tab and the first four articles that come up are
19 generally pretty positive. The first one is from Town Hall,
20 a generally conservative publication, about his book, Back
21 in the Game.
22   The second article, it's also about his book, Back
23 in the Game. Third is about him talking about election
24 results. Fourth is from Fox, another positive article about
25 his book, Back in the Game. You don't have a group of

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1 people at Google, they're sitting there thinking, hey, we
2 like Steve Scalise, so we're going to generate positive
3 articles on these search results? That's not what's
4 happening, right?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, I'm very glad to see
6 congressman Steve Scalise fully recovered and back, but we
7 don't -- we don't, you know, deal with individual queries
8 and, you know, with any viewpoint. And so this is our --
9   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: In fact, nowhere in your
10 programming code does Congressman Steve Scalise even show
11 up; isn't that right?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, that's right.
13   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: Okay. Now, I'm going to
14 do a real time Google search for a very similar term. I'm
15 going to change one word. So I'm going to search for
16 Congressman Steve King. I'm going to hit the news tab. The
17 first article that pops up is from ABC news. It says Steve
18 King's racist immigration talk prompts calls for
19 congressional censor. That's a negative article, but you
20 don't have a group of people at Google sitting here thinking
21 and trying to modify surgery results, every time Steve Kings
22 comes up, a negative article appears? That's not what's
23 happening right?
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We always operate for any query
25 with the same set of principles. We are trying to reflect

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1 what is currently, you know, if it is newsworthy, what is
2 currently being discussed about that -- that -- that phrase.
3   REPRESENTATIVE TED LIEU: Thank you. So let me
4 just conclude here, by stating the obvious. If you want
5 positive search results, do positive things. If you don't
6 want negative search results, don't do negative things. And
7 to some of my colleagues across the aisle, if you're getting
8 bad press articles and bad search results, don't blame
9 Google or Facebook or Twitter, consider blaming yourself. I
10 yield back.
11   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
12 gentleman's time has expired. The Chair recognizes the
13 gentleman from Arizona, Mr. Biggs.
14   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Thank you, Mr.
15 Chairman. Thanks for being here, Mr. Pichai. I -- I don't
16 disagree with -- with one point made by the last
17 interrogator -- questioner, let's call them questioner;
18 that's easier to say. In -- in the sense that I think you
19 have a First Amendment right, to do what you guys want to
20 do. So you're a private company. There's very few
21 constraints on the First Amendment, although there are lots
22 of constraints ultimately, when we start looking at it,
23 everything from liable to slander to threatening and
24 intimidating to yelling fire in a crowded theater.
25 There's -- we have constraints on First Amendment speech.

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1 But you've seemed, as we've gone through here today, to say
2 that Google doesn't have bias. You, yourself, have said you
3 personally don't have bias or animus, and you also tried to
4 implement policies to prevent bias and animus, as well.
5 Isn't that true?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yeah. I -- I -- we work hard
7 to build our products in a neutral way, and are committed to
8 doing it that way.
9   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Right. And in some
10 respects, we haven't heard much discussion about the human
11 intersection with the creation or manipulation or editing of
12 algorithms, but there is human interaction with the
13 creation. Humans create the algorithms, and you might have
14 some artificial intelligence that -- that might do some
15 additional information as it goes. But originally the
16 creativity comes from the humans, right?
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yeah, that's right.
18   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Well, how can we be
19 assured that foreign adversaries will not use your platform
20 against Americans or American national interests?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we -- we always worry
22 about that, that as a threat factor. And this is why we
23 make sure, you know, the -- the best way we do it. When
24 we're building our products, we don't rely on, you know, one
25 person or groups of people to be able to do it. We follow a

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1 set of robust processes, including tests and validation both
2 from users. We get feedback from users, and we use raters
3 externally, to evaluate. And we do this, for example, our
4 search raters in the U.S. are there in all the 50 states of
5 the U.S. We geographically distribute them, so that we
6 really get the perspectives of everyone around the country.
7   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Well, that -- that
8 doesn't really get to the answering my question of -- of
9 security assurance. And so, I -- I guess, if manipulation
10 of your information systems was not possible or effective,
11 we -- we would -- we would not be seeing so many countries
12 investing in -- in the capability of manipulation, whether
13 it's Russians or Chinese or Iranians or others that are, you
14 know, attempting to manipulate your system?
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: And they may be -- there may be
16 attempts to use our products and services. So, for example,
17 because we provide advertising products, you know,
18 somebody -- and what we saw in the 2016 election was, you
19 know, limited activity, but it's improper. Two accounts
20 related to Russia, you know, advertised using our platforms.
21   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: That totaled $4,700 I
22 think you said.
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yeah. So that's an example of,
24 you know, the kind of threat we see and, you know, it's
25 something we're working hard to mitigate and avoid.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Okay. And so, I -- I
2 guess, I would say that it looks like you guys have a policy
3 of do no evil, right? Is that fair to say you -- you?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It -- it's not an official
5 policy, but, you know, it's a -- it's a statement which has
6 been communicated by us, internally.
7   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: And -- and other people
8 have brought up the -- the work that you may or may not be
9 doing in China and I want a clarification of that. Are you
10 looking to expand in China and cooperate with the Chinese
11 government on a platform release in China?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: To the question, it's about
13 search. Right now, we have no plans to launch search in
14 China. We have always over the years explored how best we
15 can continue to serve users in China, but that's what we're
16 doing.
17   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Are you doing anything
18 with the data share with the Chinese government.
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Today, we don't operate our
20 services, which -- which involve user data like Google
21 search or Gmail in China. And so, no.
22   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: So, you're telling me
23 nothing at all then, with China?
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We do provide, you know, for
25 example, Android, which is an operating system. We work

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1 with partners around the world and -- and there are OEM
2 manufacturers around the word, including in China.
3   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: So -- so you
4 manufacturers, but beyond manufacturers, any -- any other
5 platform use?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't have any special
7 agreements on user data today with --
8   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Chinese government?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's right.
10   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Okay. Do you share the
11 data that you collect on civilians with The United States
12 Federal Government?
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We comply with valid law
14 enforcement request -- requests and, you know, and we -- we
15 have a due process. We comply with valid law enforcement --
16   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: What's the extent of
17 that?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we publish a
19 transparency report, in which we give insights into the law
20 enforcement request we've gotten and are, you know, and --
21 and our compliance there.
22   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: The last question I
23 have and real quickly. In May 2016, Google banned all ads
24 by payday lenders, even though it invested in LendUp, which
25 is effectively a payday lender, and it -- it banned ads

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1 by -- by competitors. Is that a normal practice?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we -- we undertook
3 ad policies in that particular area, because we saw evidence
4 of misuse, and we had gotten a lot of feedback, and that's
5 what we reacted to.
6   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Did you -- did you ban
7 your own, LendUp?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I don't think Google is
9 involved. I think one of our sister companies is, you know,
10 has -- has an investment in --
11   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: In LendUp, right?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I think that's my
13 understanding.
14   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Was it banned?
15   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
16 gentleman's time -- and a gentleman. Time hazards.
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I can follow up. I'm not aware
18 of the specifics. I'm happy to follow up.
19   REPRESENTATIVE ANDY BIGGS: Okay. Thank you.
20   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
21 gentleman's time has expired. The gentleman from Maryland,
22 Mr. Raskin, is recognized.
23   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
24 Welcome and thank you for your testimony today. Do you know
25 what Frazzledrip is?

33 (Pages 126 - 129)

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'm not aware of the specifics
2 about it. I heard some references about it from my -- from
3 my team, over the past 24 hours.
4   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: I just learned about
5 it in The Washington Post this morning. There's a article
6 with this headline, "A Platform for Free Speech That
7 Extremist Routinely Exploit." And in it, the article
8 explains that the recommendation engine for YouTube,
9 which -- which is owned by Google, correct?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, sir.
11   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: The recommendation
12 engine for YouTube recently suggested videos claiming that
13 politicians, celebrities and other lead figures were
14 sexually abusing or consuming the remains of children, often
15 in Satanic rituals. According to watchdog group Algo
16 Transparency. The claims echo and often site the
17 discredited Pizza Gate conspiracy, which two years ago led
18 to a man firing shots into a northwest Washington D.C.
19 pizzeria in search of children he believed were being held
20 as sex slaves by Democratic party leaders.
21   One recent variation on the theory, which began
22 spreading on YouTube this spring, claimed that Democrat
23 Hillary Clinton and her long time aide, Huma Abedin, had
24 sexually assaulted a girl and drank her blood. A conspiracy
25 theory, its proponents dubbed Frazzledrip.

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1   Now, the article goes on to describe how this
2 Frazzledrip conspiracy is all over YouTube, and some of the
3 Frazzledrip clips purport to show grainy images of Clinton
4 and Abedin committing crimes and speak of invoking the death
5 penalty. In one video, which has been viewed 77,000 times
6 and remains online today, has a voiceover that says, "will
7 these children become the desert at the conclusion of the
8 meal."
9   So and this is just one example that they use of
10 extreme right and paranoid conspiracy groups using YouTube
11 as a place to trade their videos and to promote propaganda.
12 What is your company policy on that and are you trying to
13 deal with it?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we are -- we are
15 constantly undertaking effort to deal with misinformation,
16 but, you know, we have clearly stated policies and we have
17 made lots of progress in many of the areas where, you know,
18 over the past year. So, for example, in areas like
19 terrorism, child safety, and so on. We are looking --
20 looking to do more, you know, this was a recent thing, but
21 I'm committed to following up on it and -- and making sure
22 we are evaluating these against our policies.
23   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: Yeah.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: But, it's an area we
25 acknowledge there's more work to be done and, you know, and

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1 and we'll definitely continue doing that.
2   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: One of the videos
3 discussed, included images of a body on a table before
4 restrained children and of Hillary Clinton with a bloodied
5 mouth and fangs claiming that she and Abedin drank the blood
6 of their victim. That was removed, but then another
7 consisting of an exact copy of the video remained online and
8 apparently, remains online.
9   So I -- I mean, is your basic position that this is
10 something you want to try to do something about, but
11 basically there's just an avalanche of such material and
12 there's really nothing that can be done. And it should be
13 buyer beware, were consumer beware when you go on YouTube?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we do grapple with
15 difficult issues. I mean, we -- we have to look at it on a
16 video by video basis, and we have clearly stated policies.
17 So we would need to evaluate whether the video, the specific
18 video.
19   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: Yeah.
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Violates any of our policies.
21 And we do strive to do it for the volume of content we do
22 get and, you know.
23   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: Yeah.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We get around 400 hours of
25 video every minute, but it's our responsibility, I think,

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1 to -- to make sure, you know, YouTube is a platform for
2 freedom of expression, but it's responsible and contributes
3 positively to society.
4   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: Some of my colleagues
5 are upset about negative references to Donald Trump, not
6 Hillary Clinton or not Barack Obama. And obviously, you
7 know, one potential strategy today is to try to heckle you
8 into somehow playing favorites with Donald Trump and
9 Republicans. I think that that would be a silly and
10 ridiculous takeaway from this. On the other hand, there is
11 material which is a true public danger.
12   You know, you've got a right to have whatever
13 politics you have. I mean, we could -- we could subpoena
14 Fox News and bring them in here and beat them up about how
15 90 percent of the references on Fox News to Barack Obama, or
16 Hillary Clinton are negative, but they've got that right
17 under the First Amendment. And you've got a right under
18 First Amendment to have whatever political views you've got.
19   But I think the point at which it becomes a matter
20 of serious public interest is when your communications
21 vehicle is being used to promote propaganda that leads to
22 violent events, like the guy showing up within the Pizza
23 Gate conspiracy case. And so I guess my question is, are
24 you taking that threat seriously?
25   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The

34 (Pages 130 - 133)

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1   gentleman's time has expired, but you can answer the
2   question.
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Thank you. We have very clear
4   policies against hate speech, things which could incite harm
5   or hatred or violence. And, you know, that's an area where
6   we are clearly taking a lot of action. But I -- I want to
7   acknowledge there's more work, more work to be done. And,
8   you know, with our growth comes more responsibility, and we
9   are committed to doing better, as we invest more in this
10   area.
11   REPRESENTATIVE JAMIE RASKIN: Thank you, Mr.
12   Chairman.
13   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you.
14   The Chair now recognizes the gentlelady from Georgia, Ms.
15   Handel.
16   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Thank you, Mr.
17   Chairman. Thank you, very much for being here, Mr. Pichai.
18   For years, the Federal Trade Commission on a bipartisan
19   basis has affirmed that precise geolocation information is
20   considered highly, highly sensitive and that consumers must
21   opt in to that. Do you agree with that?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes, I agree with that.
23   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Do you think there's
24   other information, privacy information of consumers, that
25   should also be required to have opt in versus opt out.

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: In general, I think a framework
2   for privacy in which users have a sense of transparency,
3   control and choice, and have a clear understanding of the
4   tradeoffs they need to make, I think is very good for
5   consumers and we would support that.
6   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Okay. And speaking
7   of privacy and transparency, I'm trying to understand the
8   difference between a paying customer for the Google Suites
9   versus the free Gmail. So when it comes to data collection,
10   are the criteria and the rules the same if you're on Google
11   Suites versus Gmail?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Gmail -- Google Suite is a -- a
13   broader suite of products than Gmail alone. You know, we
14   have very specific policy -- policies around Gmail. In
15   general, we don't as a company, we don't read your Gmail,
16   unless we have expressed consent from you, for example, to
17   investigate security or abuse related to an account. On G
18   Suite. We provide G Suite across many instances. We have
19   clear policies against that, too. We don't use it --
20   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: All right. But what
21   I'm asking is are the policies different?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't distinguish between.
23   So, for example, today we provide G Suite for free to many
24   educational institutions. We don't use the data for -- from
25   within G Suite for advertising.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: You collect it?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Well, we store. You know, G
3   Suite involves user documents, be it documents or Gmail, so
4   we store it for the -- for the user so that they can access
5   it.
6   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: And no one in your
7   company has access to it?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: People --
9   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Or they do have
10   access?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have policies that they
12   cannot access it unless they have specific consent from the
13   user, for a specific situation.
14   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Okay. What would be
15   one of those reasons.
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: For example, you may want to
17   investigate fraudulent activity related to your account,
18   and, you know, we -- we may ask for your permission to do --
19   do that. There may be a valid law enforcement requirement,
20   which we have to comply with.
21   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: All right. I'm going
22   to go back to Google Takeout, which my colleague from
23   Georgia asked about earlier. I would say that the average
24   person probably has never heard of Google Takeout until
25   recently. So when did it become available?

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we -- we started this
2   effort, you know, I'm aware of it as earliest over 10 years
3   ago, and we started building for many of our products. We
4   started an office in Chicago with the express goal of
5   providing users with this takeout capabilities. I think we
6   were quite unique in starting to work on that as a company,
7   but there's more effort we plan to do there.
8   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Who has access to it?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: This is for users. So, for
10   example, if you decide to, you know, stop your Gmail account
11   and you go with another email provider, being able to take
12   your Gmail data with you, and that's what it's designed for.
13   Takeout is for users. Yeah.
14   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: And -- but no one
15   from within Google or any other place, can come in to Google
16   Takeout and get your information?
17   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: No. It's -- it's expressly
18   designed for consumers to take their data with them and --
19   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: I understand what
20   it's designed for. I'm asking who practically can get
21   access to it?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we have very strict
23   limitations on access to sensitive --
24   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Oh, so it's more than
25   just, if -- if I were going to Google Takeout for Karen

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1 Handel, I'm not the only person who has access to my Google
2 Takeout?
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: No. You are the only person
4 who can take out your data, but I'm just saying, you -- you
5 asked about internal systems. We have clear policies.
6 Employees can't go looking at user data, unless there is
7 a -- there are a narrow set of circumstances, which may
8 involve either consent from the user or legal situations, et
9 cetera.
10   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: All right. Is it
11 free?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Is takeout?
13   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: To get your data?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Yes. It is free.
15   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: So when a person
16 takes their data out or they want to go through and clean up
17 privacy and they delete, is it really deleted or is it just
18 hidden.
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: If -- depending on the service,
20 if you're terminating your account and you -- you delete the
21 data, it will take some time, and we communicate that to
22 propagate through our systems and -- and get removed, but we
23 follow through on that.
24   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: But it's deleted,
25 it's not just hidden from sight?

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It's deleted.
2   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Okay. One last
3 question. You said that your company embarked on an
4 initiative to register people to vote. How did you do that
5 and who did you target and in what states?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: All -- all we -- you know, so,
7 for example, during registration windows, we, you know,
8 we -- we highlight, we give people information about where
9 to register. We do these things representatively across --
10 for all our users across the U.S. And all indications are
11 that the participation is uniformly high across our user
12 base. So the, you know, we -- we do this with the express
13 goal of --
14   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: But how did you do
15 it? Did you send out links? Did you send out voter
16 registration forms to people?
17   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
18 gentlelady's time has expired, but you can answer the
19 question.
20   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: Thank you.
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: For example, on -- on the
22 Google home page, we may say check where you're polling
23 places, and as a user, you can click on it and we give you
24 the location of your closest polling locations and the
25 opening times available to you. That's an example.

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1   REPRESENTATIVE KAREN HANDEL: I'll be following up
2 on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.
3   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The Chair
4 now recognizes the gentlelady from Washington State, Ms.
5 Jayapal.
6   REPRESENTATIVE PRAMILA JAYAPAL: Thank you, Mr.
7 Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Pichai, for coming to testify
8 before us. I, for one, am thrilled that you, as a company
9 encourage people to vote. I think we should all do that.
10 I'd love to see election day as a holiday.
11   I've been deeply concerned for some time about
12 employers mandating forced arbitration rather than allowing
13 for people to pursue justice. And forcing people into
14 arbitration when they've already experienced a violation of
15 their basic rights, I think is a deep injustice, and it
16 subjects people who have already been victimized to further
17 victimization. And we've seen research that shows that it
18 discourages people from coming forward to report abuses to
19 begin with.
20   There are very successful companies in your field,
21 including companies like Salesforce, that have thrived while
22 foregoing forced arbitration contracts and clauses. And I
23 think that we can all agree that the argument, that
24 eliminating force arbitration threatens innovation should be
25 dismissed out of hand. Eliminating forced arbitration has

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1 been a shared priority by my colleagues on this committee,
2 as evidenced by the fact that our ranking member, Jerry
3 Nadler, as well as Hank Johnson, David Cicilline and I have
4 all introduced legislation to end the practice.
5   And I was very heartened to see that Google ended
6 forced arbitration, but only in the context of -- of sexual
7 harassment. And so, I hope you agree with me, that
8 upholding people's fundamental right to safety in the
9 workplace and freedom from discrimination, whether it's
10 based on gender or sexual orientation or race or religion or
11 any other metric, really benefits all of us.
12   And so, I wanted to point out that it's
13 particularly critical for companies like Google to take that
14 moral leadership in this space, since there are limitations
15 for affected people to pursue systemwide change through
16 tools, like class action lawsuits. And I recognize that
17 this is not exclusive to Google and that it extends to many,
18 many other employers.
19   But since you're here before the committee today,
20 which has jurisdiction over this issue, I want to ask you if
21 you will voluntarily commit to expanding the policy of
22 ending forced arbitration for any violation of a person's
23 rights, not just around sexual harassment, but really for
24 all of your employers and your contractors.
25   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congresswoman, thanks for the

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1 question. It's an important area. One thing, if I could
2 clarify. Today, our arbitration agreements don't require
3 any confidentiality provisions. That's how we have done it.
4 But -- but as you -- as you mentioned, for sexual
5 harassment, we -- we agreed that it should be up to the
6 employees and we gave them a choice.
7   We're definitely looking into this further. It's
8 an area where I've gotten feedback, personally, from our
9 employees. So we are definitely reviewing what we could do.
10 And, you know, I'm -- I'm -- I'm looking forward to
11 consulting and -- and happy to think about more -- more
12 changes here.
13   REPRESENTATIVE PRAMILA JAYAPAL: Well, we'd love to
14 work with you on that. I think that this, really, for
15 people who are listening to this hearing that may not
16 understand this. Basically, when you sign a contract, as we
17 saw with sexual harassment, you -- some -- some employees
18 don't even know what they're signing away, but they're
19 signing away their ability to actually pursue claims, in the
20 justice system, by going to forced arbitration.
21   And so I think that this is very, very important.
22 I think you're point about confidentiality is important, but
23 that's not the issue here. That is about transparency, but
24 it's not about the basic right of somebody to seek access to
25 do process and to justice, in the courts.

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1   So what stage are you at in advancing the issue of
2 ending forced arbitration, both on the sexual harassment
3 side, but also in terms of the process for looking at it
4 more broadly? How do we -- how do we have a timeline? How
5 do we engage with you to make sure that you endorse our
6 legislation, as we move forward in the next congress?
7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We've already, you know,
8 we've -- we've already enacted the changes for forced
9 arbitration for giving arbitration as an option, for
10 employees for sexual harassment. We're definitely reviewing
11 what more we could do in this area. I'm definitely happy to
12 have my office follow up, as they're thinking about it to
13 get -- get your thoughts on it. And we are definitely
14 committed to looking into this more and making changes.
15   REPRESENTATIVE PRAMILA JAYAPAL: Thank you. The
16 other issue I wanted to just raise in my last minute, is
17 moderating hate speech. And this has come up in a number of
18 different ways, and we appreciate the work that you have
19 done, particularly with YouTube. I know we had Alex Jones
20 in the room earlier, but I think, you know, promoting
21 conspiracy theories that are patently false and result in
22 real harm is a problem.
23   Do you agree with the UN High Commissioner for
24 Human Rights assessment that social media played a role, for
25 example, in perpetuate -- perpetuating genocide side against

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1 the Rohingya and what is Google's responsibility to moderate
2 hate speech on -- on your platforms?
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We feel a tremendous sense of
4 responsibility to moderate hate speech. You know, define --
5 we've defined hate speech clearly as inciting violence or
6 hatred towards groups of people. It's absolutely something
7 which I think I need to take a very strict line on and --
8 and we've stated our policies clearly and we're working hard
9 to make our enforcement better, and -- and we've gotten a
10 lot better, and but it's not enough. And so, we're
11 commented to doing more here.
12   REPRESENTATIVE PRAMILA JAYAPAL: Well, we really
13 look forward to working with you on that. And before I
14 yield back, Mr. Chairman, let me just take a point of
15 personal privilege to say, I was born in the same state as
16 you in India, and I'm excited to see you leading a company
17 and continuing to show that immigrants to this country
18 contribute great value, in spite of some of the rhetoric we
19 hear. Thank you, Mr. Pichai. I yield back.
20   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE:
21 Gentleman's lady -- gentlelady's time has expired. Now, The
22 Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr.
23 Rothfus.
24   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: Thank you, Mr.
25 Chairman. Mr. Pichai, thank you for being here. I

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1 appreciated the reference to Pittsburgh in your opening
2 testimony. Great to have you in a -- a part of our
3 community there. Your company really should be held out as
4 a success story of America's free enterprise system. Google
5 has very powerful products and services. There is a saying
6 that goes, with -- with great power comes great
7 responsibility and I think you realize that.
8   I want to talk a little bit about these allegations
9 of bias that have been out there. You know, I've seen the
10 media reports about a few Google engineers lamenting the
11 2016 election results. Then, they discussed potentially
12 manipulating search results that would favor some political
13 viewpoints in the future. On a hypothetical level, those
14 Google engineers believe that they had the power to
15 influence an election.
16   Do you think Google's products and services are
17 powerful enough that they can sway public opinion to tilt an
18 election if the company wanted to? Are your products that
19 powerful?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, today we see users
21 get information from a wide variety of sources. And while
22 Google is a big player in search, search is just one of the
23 ways in which people get information. They get it from
24 social networking sites.
25   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: Do you -- do you

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1 think that your products are that powerful?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's not the way I think
3 about it when we are building -- building the products. You
4 know, we constantly worry about the areas where we are not
5 doing well and we're looking to do better. We definitely
6 see a lot of innovation, not just from within the U.S. but
7 globally around the world. And -- and we do realize we are
8 a large company and with that comes scrutiny, and we -- we
9 think it's important to engage on that.
10   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: You know, you've
11 testified about Google and its algorithms working on a
12 nonpar -- in a non nonpartisan way. And that you're
13 confident that Google does not approach work with any
14 political bias. Zoe Lofgren highlighted the -- the vote
15 in -- in Santa Clara County.
16   Does Google do anything to ensure ideological
17 diversity among its employees and decision makers?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we've -- you know,
19 I've communicated clearly to the company that, you know, we
20 need to welcome viewpoints from across all sides. As a
21 company, we are -- your right. We're definitely based in
22 northern California. And clearly, you know, there -- there
23 is a leaning there, but last year was the first year we grew
24 faster outside of California than within California. We
25 also have -- have employees globally and I do see a wide

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1 variety of opinions expressed across --
2   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: When -- when Mr.
3 Johnson asked a question about the -- the -- the trusted
4 flagger program. You said for us to review. Who's the us?
5 Who's doing the -- who's doing that review?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We review things, both with a
7 combination of our automated -- automated systems, as well
8 as manual reviewers. These are people who are part of --
9   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: And -- and how many
10 people is that? How -- how many; is it a committee? Is it?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, in 20 -- we've
12 committed to scale up our manual reviewers to over 10,000
13 people, and we are well -- well underway to do that. And so
14 this is thousands of people working 24/7 globally across,
15 looking at content based on our policies.
16   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: Google has described
17 it -- it's ethic with these pithy, great statements; don't
18 be evil, do the right thing. I'd like to discuss these
19 ideals in relation to reports at Google, that we've been
20 talking about with China. The strict authoritarianism the
21 Chinese government rules its people has caused concern
22 around the globe for generations. I vividly recall the
23 early days of June 1989 and Tiananmen Square.
24   Now I read reports, recent reports, about crackdown
25 on Muslims, on Christians, on Falun Gong, mass

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1 incarcerations and human rights abuses against people of
2 faith in China should be a major concern for everyone around
3 the world, including your company. Did Google design a
4 prototype for a search engine that could be used in China to
5 censor content?
6   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we have undertaken
7 an internal effort.
8   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: Did they -- did you
9 create a prototype, though? There was a report in The
10 Intercept that says a prototype for the censored search
11 engine was designed.
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have --
13   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: Are they wrong?
14   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have explored what search
15 could look like, if it -- if it were to be launched in a
16 country like China. And that's what we explored and -- and
17 that --
18   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: How many months was
19 that project ongoing?
20   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We've had the project underway
21 for a while, and there have been other projects which we
22 have undertaken for a while and we have never launched them,
23 too. So we're constantly exploring --
24   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: How many -- how many
25 people were working on it?

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1   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: The estimates, you know, of --
2 sorry. The number of engineers on the project have varied
3 over time.
4   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: 10?
5   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: At one point we've had over a
6 100 people working on it. That's my understanding.
7   REPRESENTATIVE KEITH ROTHFUS: I just want to echo
8 what my colleague, Ms. Jayapal had -- had said. You know,
9 yeah, I'm glad you're here at the committee, but I'm -- I'm
10 glad you're here in our country. You are the success story
11 and I can just think of you sitting as a teenager in India,
12 thinking that this was probably never even on your -- your
13 radar. But you came to this country because this country
14 had that promise out there and I want to thank you for being
15 here today and encourage you to continue collaborating with
16 this committee. Thank you.
17   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
18 gentleman's time has expired. The Chair now recognizes the
19 gentlelady from Florida, Ms. Demings.
20   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: Thank you, so much,
21 Mr. Chairman and Mr. Pichai, I'm here. Thank you, so much
22 for being here and enduring all that we have heard and seen
23 today.
24   As you know, Google certainly has significant
25 influence over the dissemination of information to the

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1 American people. You have the ability to mold and shape how
2 we think, the decisions we make, what we buy. But let me
3 just remind you and others, that America, with all of its
4 greatness, has enough problems and we have to make sure that
5 the gift of Google is used. The service that you provide is
6 a responsible one. In your own statement you said, that the
7 American people have the ability to use technology to
8 improve their lives. So that tells me Google helps to solve
9 problems, not create problems.
10   My concern specifically centers around the
11 protection of the consumers, because Google certainly would
12 not be anything without the consumer. So the protection of
13 the data, their information, the -- the level of service
14 that you provide. And I know we've talked a lot today about
15 data collection and how it's used, and if the settings are
16 in place, then it's not collected.
17   So let me just understand, really starting with the
18 chairman's questions, which I thought was a -- a good
19 opening for us. If a consumer tells you not to collect
20 their data, then you do not collect the data; is that
21 correct?
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's -- that's right.
23   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: Okay. And how does
24 Google or does Google allow advertisers to target ads based
25 on sensitive factors, like race, ethnicity, religious,

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1 affiliation?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Currently, we don't have those,
3 the ones you mentioned, as factors in our advertising
4 product.
5   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: Okay. And what is
6 your policy regarding predatory advertisements?
7   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we -- we have strict
8 policies against and, you know, we -- we respond to con --
9 concerns there. We have undertaken significant changes to
10 detection, we find predatory practices on our platform. So
11 it's an area we're committed to doing better.
12   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: And since we do
13 represent everybody, poor communities as well as affluent
14 communities. How do you make sure that the information that
15 is received in at risk communities protects the consumer, if
16 you will? How are they treated the same in terms of
17 affluent versus poor communities? How do you make sure that
18 they are.
19   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We do engage with community
20 organizations. We do, you know, our teams do wide outreach.
21 And to the extent there are specific concerns, which, you
22 know, the -- there's an abuse of our product or platform
23 which affects, you know, communities disparately, we do
24 follow up and engage and take action.
25   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: And how do you do that

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1 again, please?
2   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: So, for example, you know,
3 the -- if there's a specific category of a product where,
4 you know, we -- we get clear feedback, the way we have
5 implemented the product has a disparate effect on some
6 minority communities, we do engage and we understand and,
7 you know, make changes in our products or policies.
8   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: So you get feedback.
9 So do you initiate or do any checking or is -- does that
10 information have to come back to you or are you proactive in
11 terms of looking for those type of vulnerabilities?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We do both and, you know, but I
13 do think there's more we can do in being proactive, and it's
14 something I'm happy to follow up and understand better.
15 But, you know, it's an area we're committed to doing well.
16   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: You talked quite a bit
17 about working more with law enforcement. I believe you said
18 that maybe four or five times. I'd like to hear more about
19 some of the things that you do with law enforcement to
20 protect the consumers, as well and protect our electoral
21 process and other things that we should care about.
22   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We -- we do this across a wide
23 variety of areas. So, for example, when there were concerns
24 expressed about election interference, it's an area where we
25 look to law enforcement for guidance. Areas like child

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1 safety is an area where we actively collaborate with law
2 enforcement agency. So fraud, malware and, you know,
3 depending on the area, we engage and we support them through
4 efforts they are trying to do. The opioid crisis is a good
5 example of an area where we are doing a lot of work with law
6 enforcement.
7   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: What do you think is
8 the main area where Google could improve to better help the
9 consumer?
10   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I always --
11   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: To better protect the
12 consumer.
13   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I always think, you know,
14 privacy is an area where we think is sacrosanct and we've
15 done a lot for users over the years, but it's an area where
16 expectations are constantly evolving, and we are, as a
17 company, needing to evolve and adapt to it. And so, it's an
18 area we're committed to doing better. But it's an area I
19 want to acknowledge that there's more to do, and that it's
20 never done, and -- and something we are committed to doing
21 better.
22   REPRESENTATIVE VAL DEMINGS: Again, thank you.
23 And, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.
24   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
25 gentlelady yields back. The Chair now recognizes the

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1 gentleman from Texas, Mr. Gohmert, for five minutes.
2   REPRESENTATIVE LOUIE GOHMERT: Mr. Pichai, I
3 appreciate your being here. And I think most all of us
4 agree on both sides, we applaud great work. For example,
5 Steven Spielberg, despite politics, he's provided my family
6 a lot of enjoyment and entertainment. You and your
7 colleagues at Google have created an extraordinary vehicle
8 for searching out things. It's fantastic. And as Mr. Lieu,
9 my friend across the aisle was pointing out, you know,
10 you've got government that's not supposed to interfere in
11 people's civil rights, and then you've got a company, a
12 corporation like Google.
13   My problem is when the government gives its
14 immunity from lawsuits over to a private corporation, that's
15 the head of that corporation, doesn't even realize that
16 there is political bias run amok in his company. And that's
17 the problem. I don't want to see you overregulated. I
18 don't want to see you regulated. I want to see others come
19 up with brilliant ways, as you, Mr. Brin and others did to
20 create something that makes life easier. But a good
21 example, you have a trusted flagger, you'd indicated, called
22 the Southern Poverty Law Center.
23   The Southern Poverty Law Center really has stirred
24 up more -- stirred up more hate than about any other group I
25 know. They stirred up one guy to the point that he went to

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1 the Family Research Council. And I know those people, and
2 they're Christians, and they believe and I believe that
3 Christianity is really more based on love than about any
4 other religion in history. God so loved the world he sent
5 his son. His son so loved the world, he gave his life. And
6 yet they stirred up hate against the Family Research Center
7 and a guy goes in shooting.
8   You have -- let -- let's see. June 18 of this
9 year, Southern Poverty Law Center announced it had reached a
10 settlement with Maajid Nawaz and his organization Quilliam
11 for falsely labeling them as Anti-Muslim hate group. They
12 were wrong. Now you consider them a trusted flagger, yet
13 they keep creating problems for people that are not haters.
14 And in fact, they had to -- excuse me. They had to pay out
15 3.375 million. My problem is, when you put your moniker on
16 them of trusted flagger, why aren't you paying 3.375 to Mr.
17 Maajid Nawaz. That's my problem. You trust people that
18 have stirred up a lot of hate.
19   And another good example, and you don't -- you're
20 so surrounded by liberality that hates conservatism, hates
21 people that really love our constitution and the freedoms
22 it's afforded people like you, that you don't even recognize
23 it. It's -- it's like a blind man not even knowing what
24 light looks like, because you're surrounded by darkness.
25 But if you look, let's see a good example. After President

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1 Trump won, your co-founder, Mr. Brin, said, quote, "most
2 people here are pretty upset and pretty sad."
3   Now a lot of us seeing the video, we saw how upset
4 the top people at Google were. And for you to come in here
5 and say there is no political bias in Google tells us, you
6 either are being dishonest and I don't want to think that or
7 you don't have a clue how politically biased Google is.
8   Now another example is Wikipedia. We do a search
9 and what comes up, as right there is the knowledge panel on
10 the right, and we hopefully will have a -- a screen shot of
11 that. We get Wikipedia. My chief of staff went on, she
12 told me, every night for two weeks and put proper, honest
13 information in with proper annotations. And Wikipedia's
14 liberal editors around the world would knock it out every
15 day and -- instead put up a bunch of garbage, like Mark
16 Levin has now been facing.
17   Yet to you, they get a trusted spot. And when
18 Wikipedia slanders or liables someone and you're the one
19 that has trusted them above any other entity, you ought to
20 be liable. You ought to be liable when the SBLC is liable.
21 You ought to be liable when Wikipedia demeans and uses their
22 political bias. And I hope and encourage you to look around
23 and notice, you runoff conservatives, you embrace liberals,
24 and it's time Google was actually not immune, so that people
25 can hold you accountable and get a little better

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1 objectivity. I see my times run out. I yield back.
2   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
3 gentleman yields back. The Chair now recognizes Mr. King.
4   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: Thank you, Mr.
5 Chairman. I appreciate your testimony here today, and I --
6 a number of these questions flow to me, even though I may be
7 repeating some of this. But I'm still not clear on how many
8 staff and who it is, that establishes the parameters by
9 which the algorithms are written. Can you tell me about how
10 many staff that is and -- and how that works?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, today, it's --
12 it's our search team, which -- which works on the core --
13 core of our search teams. And it's, you know, a little over
14 thousand people. I can, you know, I'm happy to elaborate
15 more, but it's -- it's thousands of people.
16   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: That's -- that's close
17 enough, conceptually. And when you hire them, are there --
18 are there people hired, coming in from the outside, or are
19 they brought up from internally? What's the typical path to
20 this, that roughly thousand person search team?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: It's a combination of both.
22 But the senior most engineers on our search team typically
23 tend to have been in the company for a very long time.
24   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: And so most of the time
25 you will know them, from having worked with them. Do you

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1 then, do you go into their social media to try to determine
2 what they might be doing on social media?
3   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Normally, we don't. You know,
4 as a company, we have allowed people to express themselves,
5 but we -- we -- we make it clear, that how we build our
6 products is done with great care and thought, focused on
7 giving users the information they are looking for.
8   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: But -- but these are --
9 this team of roughly a thousand, they're the people that
10 write the parameters by which those who write the
11 algorithms, write the algorithms?
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: That's roughly correct. Yeah.
13   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: Uh-huh. And so, there
14 isn't really any -- any look at what their private lives
15 are, even though their -- their public social media is not
16 examined by the company. And does anyone outside of Google
17 know who these thousand people are?
18   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know, we don't -- we don't
19 examine their personal activities. And, you know, there are
20 some -- some senior people are -- who do participate in
21 conferences and meetings outside and they are known to the
22 outside community.
23   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: And we're watching
24 people whose social media has knocked them out of some
25 pretty high positions in life. Almost every week, there's

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1   So how would you expect to get to an unbiased
2 result with a built in formula that I've described, that I
3 don't think you object to or disagree with?
4   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's an important
5 question, but the way we rank our services is essentially
6 based on user feedback, and that's what drives the iterative
7 loop in our you know, in what we put in, so.
8   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: I do understand how
9 it's prioritized that way, and I watch what's going on. But
10 I -- I made this point that, if we don't know who the
11 thousand are and we can't look at their social media and we
12 can't see the algorithms to understand the results of the
13 work they're doing behind closed doors. And yet the public
14 believes that it's an open forum, where there's an -- a
15 balanced exchange of open access for information.
16   Of course, it's not. And so I have said we either
17 need to know who they are and look at their social media,
18 and if that doesn't solve this problem, next step then is,
19 publish the algorithms. If that doesn't happen, then the
20 next step on the line is Section 230. The amendments of
21 Section 230, and the step on the line beyond that is a Teddy
22 Roosevelt step. Now, I'm with Mr. Gohmert. I don't want to
23 regulate anything, but neither do I want to see a society
24 that's so polarized and so divided and so loaded that the
25 will of the American people can't be expressed in the ballot

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1 one or more whose social media -- this week, a couple of
2 them that I can think of just in the last 24 or 48 hours.
3 But I -- I'm going to make this point and I -- and I believe
4 I've made it with a number of the -- of the -- the internet
5 companies that have been sitting here at this table, in the
6 past.
7   What we read with situation here is, that there's a
8 very strong conviction on this side of the aisle, that the
9 algorithms are written with a -- with a bias against
10 conservatives. The people on the other side don't agree
11 with that because, of course, it benefits them. And but
12 what we don't know are, who are these thousand people, and
13 we don't know what their social media looks like. But we do
14 know that the people that come from that county are about 80
15 percent supporters of Hillary Clinton, if I listen to the
16 gentlelady from California, correctly.
17   And so, that would be a built in bias, if I know
18 people from California and know their politics from
19 California, and I think I do. So we've got, at least
20 theoretically, a built in bias that's here. It's not being
21 examined. Your not examining the social media. How would
22 you expect that you could get to an objective result which
23 you said that, you know, we build our products in a neutral
24 way, but that doesn't mean that your product comes out
25 neutral.

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1 box. That looks like either where we are or the direction
2 we're going.
3   And I would just finish it with this. I have a
4 seven year old granddaughter, who picked up her phone before
5 the election, and she's playing a little game, kind of game
6 a kid would play, and up on there pops a picture of her
7 grandfather. And I'm not going to say into the record what
8 kind of language was used around that picture of her
9 grandfather, but I'd ask you, how does that show up on a
10 seven year old's iPhone who's playing a kids game?
11   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, iPhone is made by
12 a different company. And so, you know, I mean.
13   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: It might have been an
14 Android. It's just -- it was a hand me down of some kind.
15   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: You know --
16   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: The
17 gentleman's time has run out.
18   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: I'd ask --
19   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: You can
20 finish your answer.
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'm happy to follow up and
22 understand the specifics. It -- there may be an application
23 which was being used which had a notification, but I'm happy
24 to understand it better and clarify it for you.
25   REPRESENTATIVE STEVE KING: Okay. Thank you, for

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1 your testimony and yield back the balance of my time.
2 Appreciate it.
3   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: Mr. Chairman?
4   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: For what
5 purposes is the gentlewoman from Texas seek recognition?
6   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: To place three
7 questions on the record, Mr. Chairman.
8   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: You --
9 we've already indicated we'll take all questions submitted
10 in writing and ask him to answer them.
11   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: And I'd appreciate it,
12 if I can share these three.
13   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: All right.
14 The gentlewoman -- without objection, the gentlewoman is
15 recognized --
16   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: I thank you for your
17 courtesy. I thank you for the courtesy of the gentlelady
18 from Alabama. I think it's her time next.
19   There have been several points made, and obviously,
20 algorithm has been mentioned over and over again. Three
21 questions.
22   One, the explaining how algorithm may play into
23 someone's impression that conservative is over liberal. I
24 think you're very clear on that, but it's not the case. In
25 addition, your clarification on China and engaging in any

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1 activities to censor those individuals. And number three,
2 the algorithms, again, about your products may be a
3 proprietary -- may be a priority over others and any
4 explanation as to how that is, in fact, if you represent it
5 to be not true, or how that might be perceived that happens,
6 your products, Google products, over others and how
7 algorithms may play a part into that.
8   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: And the
9 gentlewoman will submit those in writing to us, so that we
10 can submit them to Mr. Pichai.
11   REPRESENTATIVE JACKSON LEE: We thank you, and I
12 thank the gentlemen and I thank you for yielding. Thank
13 you, very much.
14   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you.
15 The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida, Mr.
16 Rutherford, for five minutes.
17   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: Thank you, Mr.
18 Chairman. Mr. Pichai, thank you very much for your
19 testimony today. I -- I want to go back to the -- the
20 privacy policy and talk about some of those issues, because
21 I think it's very important for the American public.
22   You mentioned the transparency in your policy, but
23 when -- you know, I know your policy is 20 pages long. It
24 changes multiple times a year. I have to ask you a couple
25 questions about the -- the policy because I, quite frankly,

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1 don't understand all of it. And that is the -- the policy
2 states that, Google's data collection applies when, quote,
3 "you use Google service." And so most consumers would think
4 that means Google Search or Google Maps. My question is:
5 Does the policy apply when a consumer contacts a DoubleClick
6 Cookie, are you then -- are they then under that policy, or
7 not?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Today, our product that is
9 called Google Ad Manager. And in general, when users
10 interact with our services, we, you know, we -- we need
11 their consent and by law, we need to apply our privacy
12 policy, so that we can offer them the full productions we
13 can and -- and fulfill our obligations.
14   And so as part of that, I think if you're
15 interacting with our ad services, we do -- you know, we do
16 get your consent for your privacy policy.
17   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: So that's written
18 in the policy and -- and they have -- okay. And then -- and
19 then secondly, if a consumer does not have a Google account
20 but they land on a web page that has Google adware again, is
21 that consumer using a Google service, under the privacy
22 policy?
23   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: My understanding would be, yes,
24 if they're interacting. If they, you know, they may be both
25 subject to the privacy policy of the publisher or -- or --

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1 or the -- or the application they're using, as well as, the
2 ad platforms that work -- work on the that -- that product.
3   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: Okay. And -- and
4 then third and finally, your privacy policy says you collect
5 voice and audio information when you use audio features.
6 However, does this mean Google Assistant is recording our
7 voices in conversations? How -- how about when just -- just
8 using Google Voice or -- or is that actually being recorded?
9   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Today, if you invoke Google
10 Voice by either using the microphone or you say, okay,
11 Google and issue a command, we treat it like a search query
12 and -- and record that activity. But we have a -- we have a
13 separate setting which -- in which, as a user, you can
14 choose whether you want these stored or not. And so, we
15 give uses the choice and the option.
16   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: See, I -- I -- you
17 know, when it gets to transparency, I think when you realize
18 you have these active -- you know, where I'm clicking and
19 giving that information and agreeing to it, I think people
20 understand that information is -- is going out and -- and
21 they're giving that permission. But it's these passive
22 collection points, you know, like -- like Android and
23 Chrome, where they're picking up that information and -- and
24 the user, I'm not sure the user actually knows that.
25   And so -- and so, you know, one of -- one of my

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1 questions is, we're -- we're agreeing to a privacy policy,
2 but we don't really know what information we're -- we're
3 giving up, because it -- it -- there are other groups that
4 you are contracting with, Android and -- and Chrome, who are
5 collecting passive information. How -- how do you address
6 that and -- and how do you make that transparent for the
7 consumer?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, we realize privacy
9 policy alone is, you know, is not enough. This is why we
10 prompt and give privacy checkups.
11   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: Right.
12   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We have --
13   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: So -- so let --
14 let me stop you there and ask you then. Because, you know,
15 is it possible for -- for Google to send me a -- a printout
16 of all the information that they have collected on me within
17 the last month and, you know, where I've been, what --
18 what -- where I've clicked, where. Is all that
19 information -- you have all that information, that can be
20 provided to me, right?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We -- we do make it available
22 to you very easily. You know, we want -- we're concerned
23 about the security of the data, so we don't, you know,
24 casually give it out, but -- but--
25   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: So -- so -- so I

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1 would ask if -- if -- because I'm running out of time. But
2 instead of -- instead of me as a consumer or anyone as a
3 consumer, giving you the privacy right up front, why don't
4 you -- why don't you be more honest with me, tell me exactly
5 what information has been collected, what information you
6 want to share and then allow me to decide how much of that
7 information I would like to share as a consumer?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, I agree with that
9 sentiment. And, in fact, what we precisely do is actually,
10 we are very transparent and like, we make it very easy. You
11 go to your account settings. We clearly tell the categories
12 and you can click and see the information we have. You can
13 turn it on or off, but we want to do better. And, you
14 know --
15   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: Yeah, but there
16 are areas where information is being collected, even if I
17 have -- I have the particular sites turned off. There's
18 still information being collected through some of these
19 other passive systems that you've -- that you've contracted
20 with, correct?
21   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We -- we are pretty explicit
22 about data, which we collect and we give protections for you
23 to turn them on or off. And even when you use a product
24 like Chrome or Gmail, you know, we -- we are -- or Google
25 Home, we're very clear about the data we collect and we

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1 reflect it back to the user, of the data we have on them.
2 And -- and we try to be transparent.
3   REPRESENTATIVE JOHN RUTHERFORD: I -- I can just
4 say and my times out, but I -- I would tell you this. I
5 would much rather be giving permission after I know what
6 information I'm -- I'm giving up. So thank you very much
7 again, and I appreciate your time. I yield back, Mr.
8 Chairman.
9   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Chair
10 thanks the gentleman, recognizes the gentlewoman from
11 Alabama, Ms. Roby, for five minutes.
12   REPRESENTATIVE MARTHA ROBY: Thank you, Mr.
13 Chairman. Thank you. I'm just going to build upon what my
14 colleague was just talking about and use a specific example.
15   In June of 2016, Google changed its privacy policy
16 to allow for combining the DoubleClick Cookie information
17 with quote "personal identifiable information." Before this
18 change, the cookies that tracked people across the web, we
19 were not melded with other consumer information Google got
20 from searches or Android phone use. And it's my
21 understanding that when Google purchased DoubleClick,
22 representations were made that Google would keep the data
23 separate.
24   The point here is, you've heard from many people
25 concerns today about the consumer and what the consumer

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1 knows. And I understand there's a personal responsibility
2 as a consumer to do my part, to try to understand this; but
3 it's also very complicated stuff. And so I -- I want to
4 point to something positive that Google is doing.
5   In March, you had the online safety road show that
6 came through Alabama's second congressional district, to a
7 middle school, Girard Middle School in Dothan. You're --
8 you're being a corporate citizen by trying to teach our
9 young people how to be smart and safe on the internet. And
10 as a mom of a 13 year old girl, I appreciate that very much.
11 I think that is truly, truly a good example of what it means
12 to be a corporate citizen. That these young people can have
13 the world in their hands and recognizing that all the
14 positive things that can come from it, there's some dangers,
15 as well.
16   I would just say I think what we would all benefit
17 from is -- is understanding, as a corporate citizen, what
18 are you doing to educate the consumer about the privacy
19 policy? You've heard many of my colleagues point to the
20 fact that you have this 20 page privacy policy, but it
21 changes multiple times during the year or there's
22 representations that are made in 2016, about DoubleClick
23 that change. And so most of us don't have a -- a way to
24 understand this, in a way to know that the data that's being
25 collected on us, exactly how it's being used.

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1 So I applaud you for the work that you're doing to
2 educate our young people, but I would just ask, if you could
3 provide us -- you said, you used the words evolve and adapt
4 when it comes to the policy, but what are you doing
5 specifically to help educate your consumers on how they can
6 be aware, of when they click accept on the privacy policy,
7 that they have a better understanding of how their data is
8 going to be used?
9 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Congressman, it's a good
10 question. And, for example, we are sending email remainders
11 for certain types of data that's being collected and asking
12 you to go review your settings. And that's an example of
13 the kind of evolution we are doing and we're implementing.
14 We're looking at combining settings where we can,
15 so that it's easier for users. So we want to minimize the
16 number of controls, but we want to match it with users have
17 complex expectations to. For example, they want some of
18 their devices to be private, but they are okay with some of
19 their other devices being able to be used where locations,
20 wherever, et cetera.
21 So we're trying to match users expectations. Users
22 do tell us when they search for weather or restaurants, they
23 want restaurants near their location and not somewhere else.
24 And -- and as you can imagine, if someone from Alabama is
25 searching, they want information relevant to them. So

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1 that's what we are trying to meet. But I agree with you,
2 that we need to simply -- simplify this even more, and
3 there's more work to do and it's a constant effort we are
4 undertaking. As I look into 2019, we'll be doing more
5 changes to make things work better, and I'll take this
6 feedback to account.
7 REPRESENTATIVE MARTHA ROBY: Well, and then, just
8 one example, my legislative assistant was showing me in the
9 privacy policy, where it's redlined to show the -- the --
10 what the change was, but it's not pointed out to, that I --
11 that I'm aware of. It's not pointed out to the consumer
12 when the policy is updated, for whatever reason, what the
13 exact change is. You have to go search for it and find it
14 yourself. And so, if I've got that correct, you can correct
15 me if I'm wrong. But my understanding is you would have to
16 scroll through the entire privacy policy -- policy to see
17 where the changes were made; is that correct?
18 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'm happy to follow up on that.
19 I, you know, I do think there are times we've pointed out to
20 the updates in a block post or something, and we make it
21 clear what the changes are, but happy to follow up and get
22 the specifics on that.
23 REPRESENTATIVE MARTHA ROBY: I just think the more
24 you could streamline to the consumer how their personal
25 information will be used, is being used, without the

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1 consumer having -- I mean, again, there's personal
2 responsibility there, as well. But I just think you're
3 doing some good things in terms of educating folks about,
4 particularly with the Online Safety Roadshow. I think that
5 you could take some of the work you're doing there, and
6 hearing our concerns here today, look for ways that you
7 could better educate the consumer moving forward. Thank
8 you. I yield back.
9 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you
10 very much, Mr. Pichai, a couple of quick follow ups here.
11 I don't think anybody asked who makes the judgment
12 calls regarding content moderation at Google?
13 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Chairman, it depends on the
14 area. So, for example, if it's YouTube, we have, you know,
15 very clear teams which are responsible for YouTube content
16 policies and --
17 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Are they
18 identified, is it possible for a customer to write to them
19 and say, hey, here's -- here's a concern I have.
20 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We give clear channels for
21 content creators to, you know, to raise consents back. And
22 we have clear avenues and -- and we also have had people who
23 are responsible for these platforms, including content
24 moderation, up here, you know, and -- and -- and I think
25 they've consulted widely here -- here, too.

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1 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: I have a
2 question about preloaded apps. Do you have agreements with
3 the companies that -- I mean, Amazon might have an app that
4 they put on your platform. Do you have a data sharing
5 agreement with them? Do they get the information and you
6 get the information that's generated by their app, as well?
7 How does that work?
8 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We don't have any special
9 agreements with respect to user data, as part of preloading
10 any application.
11 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: So if
12 another -- somebody puts an app on your platform, they do it
13 with your permission; is that correct?
14 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Not necessarily, you know. So,
15 for example, our -- a device manufacturer can preload
16 applications on -- on Android and, you know, it's up to them
17 and the app developer to do so.
18 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: All right.
19 Do -- if they operate on your operating system, do you get
20 the information, as well as, the app owner?
21 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Of -- of information about
22 what's happening within that application.
23 CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Right.
24 MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: Unless there -- there may be
25 specific cases where the user is given as diagnostic

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1 information. So the answer would depend on the context, but
2 in general, no. I mean, the relationship is between the
3 user and the app developer.
4   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: So if you
5 get an app that gathers information on a specific thing,
6 that's not also coming to Google, as well as, to the -- the
7 developer of the app?
8   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: In a general sense, no.
9   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: All right.
10 And then finally, and this you can -- you can write to us a
11 written answer, because it's a very lengthy answer, I
12 believe. But I'm interested in knowing -- I know you've had
13 a lot of difficulties in Europe of late. And I'm interested
14 in knowing how your policy in Europe differs from your
15 policy in The United States.
16   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: I'm happy to have it -- I think
17 it's a pretty extensive topic. I'm happy to have follow up
18 on that -- that area back to -- back to your office.
19   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Okay.
20 Yes, we would appreciate that. We'll give you some written
21 questions, that other members have provided. We'll have
22 some more of our own, and we would ask that you respond to
23 those promptly.
24   MR. SUNDAR PICHAI: We definitely will.
25   CHAIR OF THE HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE: Thank you.

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1 Well, you've gone for about three and a half hours, and it's
2 about what we predicted, isn't it, yesterday when we talked?
3 So we thank you very much for your participation today.
4 This concludes today's hearing and without objection, all
5 members will have five legislative days to submit written
6 questions for the witness or additional materials for the
7 record. And with that, this hearing is adjourned.
8   (Proceedings concluded.)

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